

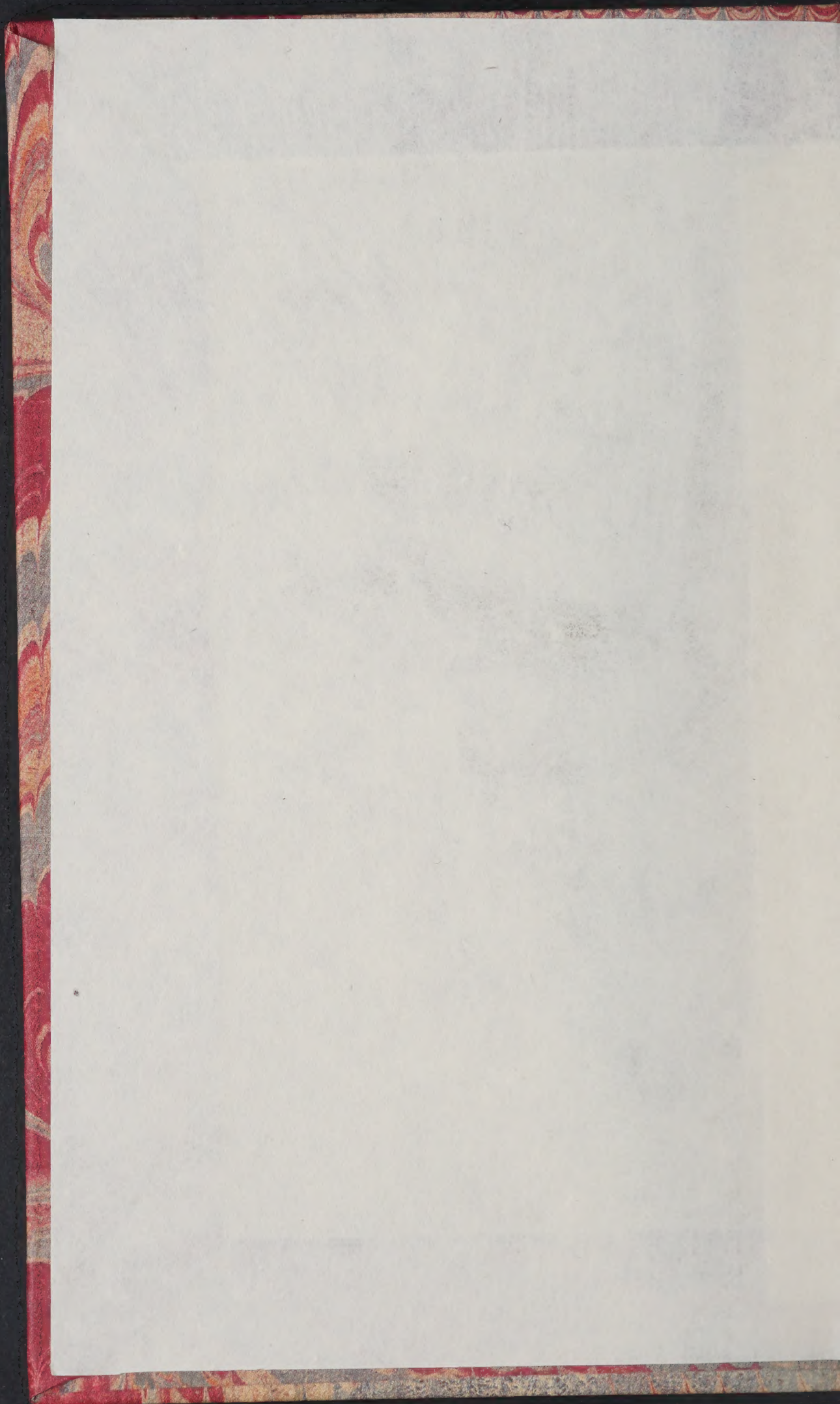






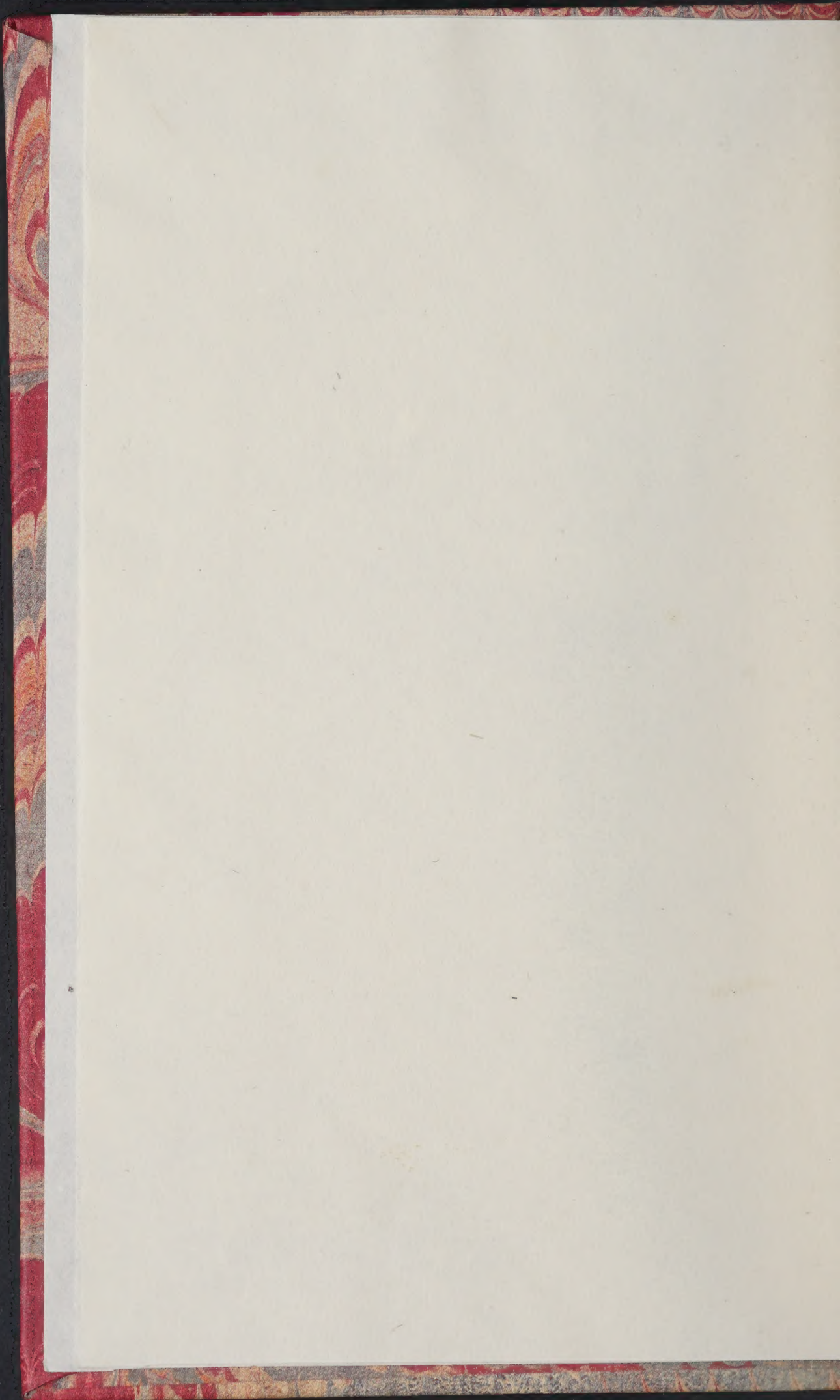






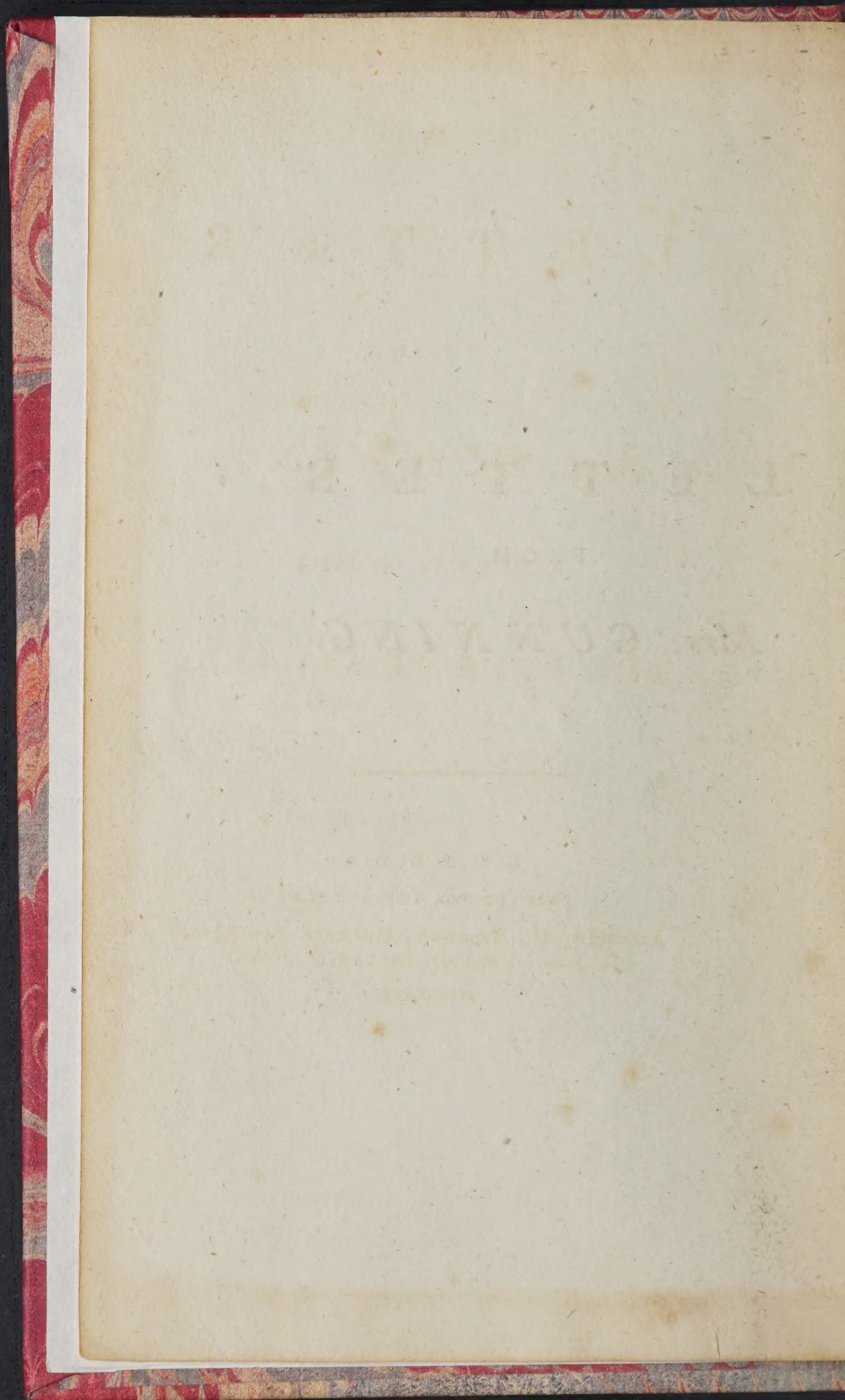
LETTER

MR. GUNNING



A
L E T T E R
FROM

Mrs. G U N N I N G.



A
L E T T E R

FROM

Mrs. GUNNING,

ADDRESSED TO HIS GRACE

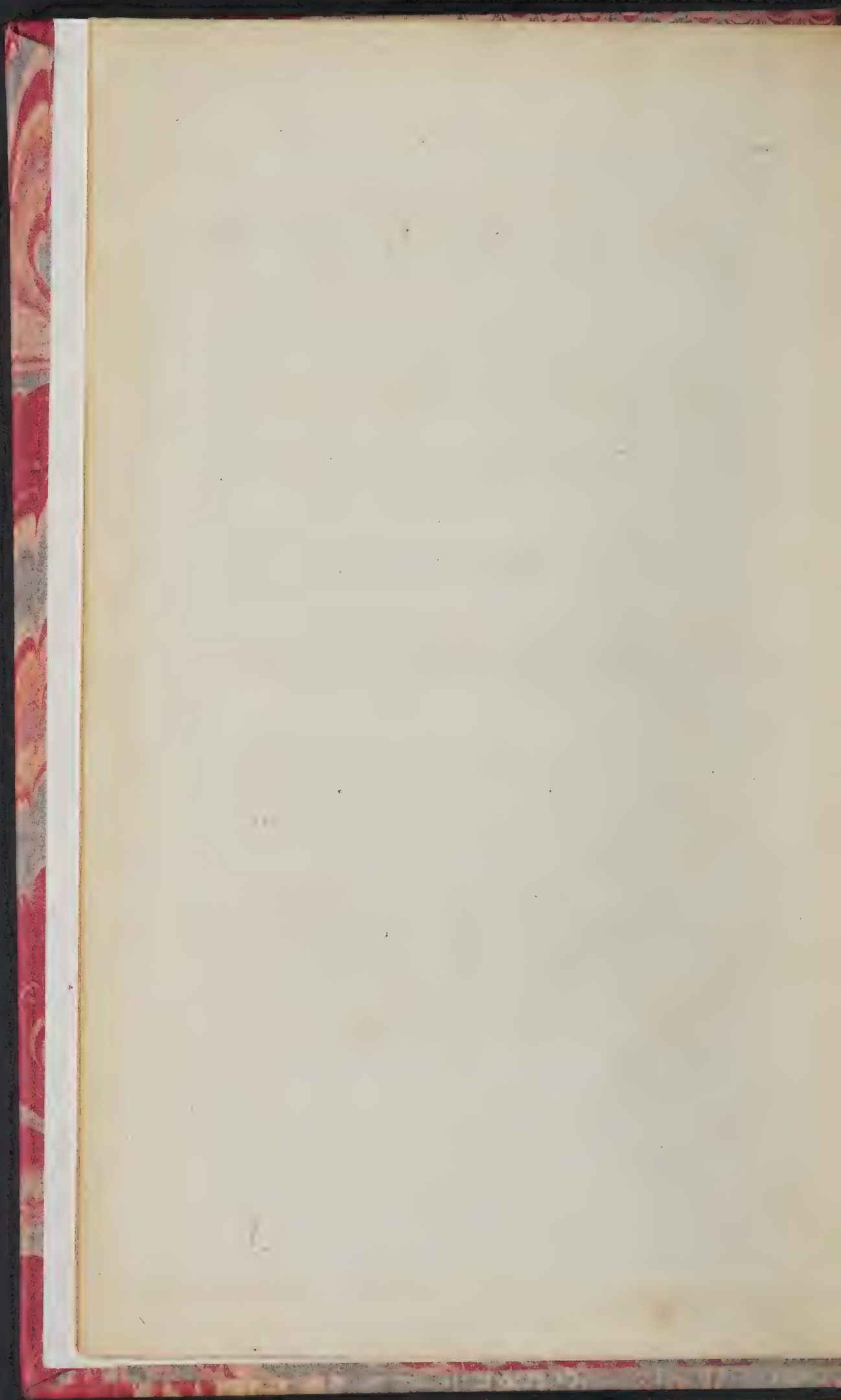
THE DUKE OF ARGYLL.

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MDCCXCI.



TO HIS GRACE

The Duke of ARGYLL.

MY LORD DUKE,

SURROUNDED as your Grace is, *not* by the *declared*, but by the *secret* and *determined* enemies of my *innocent*, permit me to add, my *glorious* child, I have but this *one* method, which necessity forces me to take, for bringing before you *some* circumstances, and *some* facts, which it is *absolutely* proper your Grace should be made acquainted with.

I would have preferred addressing this letter to you at your own house, but from *sad* experience, which I have purchased at a very *high price*, I was but *too* sure that any thing written by *me*, or by *General Gunning's* daughter,

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would

would not have found its way to your Grace's hands, without a *prior* inspection; and if, as it is *very likely* would have been the case, *my* ideas had not suited with those of the *Inspector's*, not without *alterations*. I do not, my Lord Duke, mean to make *this* assertion the subject of *publick* scrutiny or *publick* enquiry; but allow me to say, I can produce to your Grace *incontestable* proofs, that will convince *you*, whatever my situation *may* be, however I may have *suffered*, I would not advance a *falsehood* to *disgrace* my honourable and *true* defence.

Never have I been *off* my guard, *never* have my *fears* been hushed; my *senses* have never slumbered when the peace or the happiness of my *proud heart's* darling has appeared to my *anxious* observation in any manner threatened or in danger; a *deadly* blow was aimed at *both* on Saturday evening, the 5th of February, and by means so *treacherous*, as at once to convince me every effort would be used to *try* if the appearance of guilt could by *any* art or machination, be fastened on as fair a fame as ever yet has graced the annals of human nature.

Having

Having before had the honour of consulting your Grace *confidentially*, on the subject of this *beloved* object, who, I conceived, was almost as dear to *you* as to *myself*, my first wish was to see you, to tell you the discovery I had made, to ask your advice, and to be governed by it; with these intentions, the next day, February 6th, I had the honour of addressing a note to your Grace, requesting you would have the goodness to come to me. There was a circumstance *so particular* that occurred from the answer I received, as determined me to go to Argyll-house that same evening; for *then* I saw the mischief in a *new* and still *more* alarming point of view; I did go, but was informed your Grace had gone out in your carriage immediately after dinner, on particular business; from *that* time I have been allowed no opportunity of seeing, speaking, or writing to you, or the events of *Saturday*, the 5th, and *Sunday*, the 6th of February, would not have been *so long* concealed from your knowledge. My motives for laying them *now* before you are just, honest, and laudable; and, I beg your patience my Lord Duke, whilst I *faithfully* explain them.

My intentions are to bring all that *I* know of this dark business, before the tribunal of your clear and *unbiassed* judgement; to unfold as much as is in *my* power, the wonderful and *monstrous* arts and *deceptions*, formed, as if by magic, to raise a mist that has enveloped all our senses, and for a time obscured the divine face of Truth; I mean, by telling you *all I know*, to put into *your* hands the thread of that clue, which may yet lead us through the labyrinths of *error*, and conduct us to the unincumbered plains of *certainty*. I know your Grace will follow this clue with avidity, *whoever* or *whatever* sacrifices to *honor* and to *justice* you may be *obliged* to make in the *great* undertaking.

I also know, and I *acknowledge it* with the *highest* sense of gratitude, that *you* have loved the innocent darling of my heart, and that *you* would never have pursued her to the very *gates* of destruction, if you had not been persuaded that she was no longer worthy of your affections; and by whom have you been imposed on to believe her guilty? My blood freezes with horror!!!

Search

Search for this mystery to the *very deepest* of its dark recess; spotless innocence has *every thing* to hope, and *nothing* to fear from the *severest* scrutiny of justice. Were the foes of my *soul's* treasure to be multiplied as the sand on the sea-shore, let them be *dragged* out from their lurking places, and face her in the *broad light* of honour; *light* is the *enemy* of *vice*, and the enemy of vice must ever be the *friend* of *virtue*. She has now, my Lord Duke, *no* protector but a *very infirm* mother, whom the Almighty, in his infinite mercy, has *yet* spared, and may *still* spare, for the sweet offices of maternal *support* and *maternal* tenderness; would your Grace but have the goodness to convince yourself how *very* worthy she is of *your* protection, her *assassins* would be *disgraced*, and *she* restored to your kind heart in all her *native* truth, simplicity, and *unforfeited* rectitude, more bright and more conspicuous for the fiery trials to which *they* have been exposed.

I have a letter in my possession, dated the 14th of January, not *forged* or *anonymous*; and it was the receipt of *that* letter directed to my daughter, and under cover to her maid, which brought me at so late an hour

on the evening of the 14th, to your Grace's door at Ealing; I sent in a note to tell her I was there, and she came for a few minutes into the carriage with me; it was on the night preceding General Gunning's *excursion* into *Dorsetshire*, that I had been alarmed not only for the *peace*, but for the *safety* of my darling; my going to Ealing at an hour so unreasonable, was with the design of bringing her away with me, but when she came into the chaise, though a little frightened at my *sudden* and *unexpected* appearance, in all other respects, she was quite as *composed*, as *unembarrassed*, and as *cheerful* as when I had parted from her four hours before; I own I felt *astonished*, it was what I had no *reason* to expect; my mind, as if by *sympathy*, partook of *her* calm, and not for worlds would I have disturbed her tranquillity, by telling her the treachery that was but *then* *beginning* to shew itself, and which has since burst in torrents, on the *most artless* of human beings. I, therefore, *suppressed* the contents of a letter that must have shocked *her* as much as it had done *me*. and accounted to *her* for the *lateness* of my visit, by saying, that I had been uneasy lest any accident might have happened, the horses
and

and servants not being returned, and that I could not sleep till I knew she was safe. I then asked her if she had met with any thing *disagreeable* since I saw her last? Her answer was *exactly* this, "The dear Duke is all goodness, you know his love for me, and I really think it encreases every time I see him." This was a most *satisfactory* and *certain* contradiction of the contents of the letter I then had about me, and which, if exposed, *must cover the writer of it with confusion*.

I beg your Grace's permission to make one observation more, before I bring you forward to Saturday, the 5th of February; I had written *certain* letters on a *certain* subject; the *writing* and *sending* of those letters had been done, consulting *only* the feelings, or, perhaps, I may more properly say, the *passions* of a mother, *truly* sensible of the *rich* gem Providence had intrusted to *her* care, a care *doubly* interesting, as *he* who should have sheltered and *guarded* this treasure with *manly* firmness, had quitted the *endearing* post that *nature* had assigned to him. I am thankful that your Grace, when the copies of those

letters were put into your hands, gave him the opportunity of *reading* them, who *well knew* he might not only have inspected them *before* they were sent out of his house, but that he might *even* have prevailed on me to have suppressed them, had he not *prior* to that period, forfeited *every* pretension to my confidence, particularly on *that* subject on *which* they were written. Yes, my Lord, I am *flattered* with this mark of *your* approbation, for had not the *intention*, at least, of my writing them been *approved* of by your Grace, *you* would not have exposed them to *his* inspection; from that time his behaviour to me was *too* contemptuous, *too* expressive of abhorrence, for *me* to delineate. One instance only it is necessary I should *not* omit; several days preceding that *most memorable* one, on which he drove from her natural home his *unoffending* daughter, with disgrace *by himself* affixed on her *spotless* character, he had *ordered* me to withdraw from *his* house, and the consequence of this *vindictive* command was, the reducing *her* in whose presence it was announced, to *such extremity*, from fits which held her upwards of two hours, that I *verily* believed would

have put an end to her existence. On this, as on all other occasions, the tenderness of a *mother* conquered the resentment of a *wife*; to save the life of *all* that was dear to me *in* life, I made *concessions*, that had they proceeded from *less interesting* motives, would have been *too* great a condescension for *innocence* to have offered as a *compromise* to *guilt*. I promised him *all* that *he* demanded, when he saw the advantage he had gained over *me*, by the situation into which he had thrown his *angel child*; I said I would take no more steps for *her* security *whilst I remained under his roof*. For he said he would separate us, and I have *religiously* kept my word *for the time mentioned by himself*, though extorted from me by cruelty.

At present I shall close the *heart-rending* subject, I wish I could say for *ever*, but it must again be taken up in *another* part of this letter with *attendant* circumstances, which I will venture to affirm have never yet been represented to your Grace in the *language of truth*, and for *my own sake*, in *no other* will I present them before you. Having quitted a subject which can have excited in your
Grace

Grace no other sentiment but that of *horror*, my next, if I am not a *very* inadequate painter, will produce a different effect, for, when the insignificancy of *folly* unites itself to the *will* and *wish* of executing such sorts of mischief, as requires a something *like wisdom* to perform with *address* and with *success*, it places the *awkward* perpetrators in a situation *equal* with *infamy*, but *below* contempt.

Mr. and Mrs. Bowen will forgive me if I have not said enough, but I *never* flatter; besides the picture I am drawing is a *family* piece. I excuse myself from entering on the *genealogy* of Mr. Bowen, because it does not concern me to inquire into it, but I conceive that *his* birth-place will not, like that of *Homer*, ever be disputed, except, indeed, such a country could be found in the wide map of the world, *where* every thing in nature is *reversed*, where the actions of men are *great* and *good* in proportion as they are *base* and *wicked*, where *dishonour* is called *honour*, and *cunning* assumes the name of *wisdom*. In *such* a country Mr. Bowen may expect to wear the *laurels* of a *hero*, and to receive the *canonization* of a *saint*.
This

This man of *words*, and this woman of *deeds*, who about three years ago had united *themselves* and *evil dispositions*, by the ties of marriage, in *one* bundle of iniquity, I had heard nothing of from that time until October last, when *their cousin*, General Gunning, was *able* to inform me that they were in lodgings at Kensington. *How* he acquired his knowledge I am yet to learn, as no correspondence between the families had been kept up; he had *never seen* Mr. Bowen, and as he *then* told me, Mrs. Bowen was confined to her house by indisposition, yet, he had been to visit them. The part they have since taken in all *his* designs will leave no doubt on my mind from *what* motives they were brought *first* to Kensington, and *afterwards* removed to London. The reward held up to these *additional engineers*, I suppose, *at least in promises*, has not been *inconsiderable*, and for what a *paltry* consideration have *they* laid hold of all such *honourable advantages*? The Mahometans *say* women have *no souls*; and *I believe* that Mrs. Bowen is in this respect a *perfect Mahometan*, therefore, like a gambler who has *nothing to lose*, she has a sort of licence to play what stake she pleases. But
 what

what can I say for her husband, *our military friend*? So *very equal* is their merit, that I cannot determine which of the *two* is most intitled to *my gratitude*, for having used their best endeavours to render me *not* the *most* happy, but the *most miserable* of *wives*, of *mothers*, and of *women*; I say their *endeavours*, for there is a good *Providence*, who like a good *architect*, will level in the dust every *superstructure* that has been erected on a *rotten* or a *suspected* foundation.

I may have intruded on your patience, my Lord Duke, and I may *also* have expressed myself with *more* warmth than propriety in *general* allows to my sex, but *when* your Grace is pleased to consider that this *gentleman* and this *gentlewoman* have *condescended* to bring themselves forward with a *groom*, and perhaps *other suborned* witnesses, for *many* more there may be of the *same* description, and for the purpose of *defamation*; when you consider that *THEY* and their canail *associates* are abetted and supported by the *ambushed enemies of innocence and purity*, who from their *concealed* situations push forward those poor *mercenaries*, to answer not only for the
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the *execution* but for the *designing* their WORKS OF DARKNESS. I say, when your Grace *considers these truths*, you will not only pardon my prolixity, but pity me *for what I have not said*, as I am contented to *conceal much more* than I have *declared*, and from motives, which, if *understood*, you, my Lord, would not condemn or disapprove. My temper is not susceptible of strong resentment on common occasions, the tryal I am *now* supporting is *not a common one*, and though it has not *destroyed*, it certainly has *disturbed* my tranquillity; there was but *one possible way* to effect the *destruction* of my peace, for even the death of my daughter would not have accomplished it; I should have *felt* like a *mother*, I should have grieved like a *mother*, but my grief would have partaken more of *pleasure* than of *pain*; under this *natural* affliction, I should every moment, after I had lost her sweet society, have looked forward with perfect resignation to the will of my God, for the *joyful* summons, when in his goodness he would again reunite me to her, and to another *who has gone before her*. ~ *Thousands* have been recalled in the *morning* of their existence,
from

few more prepared for *such* a change: *short* in number as her days have been, they are not *unmarked* with religious, moral, and social duties. I had nothing to fear for the *fairness* of *her* accounts, whenever she should be called upon to render them up to her *Maker*, and may that Omnipotent Power, whose *mercies* are *infinite*, but whose *justice* is *aweful*, condemn or acquit her and me of *all* our faults at the last day, by the *guilt* or by the *innocence* of our *hearts* and of our *actions*, regarding what have been laid to our charge by the ENEMIES of VIRTUE and of HONOUR. I have said there was but *one possible way* by which my peace could have been *destroyed*. Your Grace, from the goodness of your own heart, would not fail to understand my meaning, though I was not to explain it, by avowing that had a single speck of that mass of accusations brought against my *beloved child*, *really* proceeded from her own conduct, then *and then only* should I have *felt* and have confessed myself the most *disgraced*, and most *wretched* of human beings. Whereas, the arts that have been used to *bring* this fate upon me, I *mean*, to *deceive* me into a belief that it was come upon me, has had an effect *quite* different

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from what was *intended*; and I have more *transport* in the trials her innocence has so gloriously sustained, and more *pride* in the *honourable* title of *her* mother, than any *other* cause for joy could have brought me; nor could my ambition have received so *ecstatic* a gratification, if by a *miracle* I had been raised to a first rank in the peerage, as I now feel, whilst I have the honour to assure your Grace
I AM A HAPPY MOTHER.

I must now *condescend* to speak once more of Bowen and his wife, though there is no *place* assigned *them* in the book of *precedence*, yet I cannot be very *wrong* in bestowing one mark of respect on such *consequential* characters; I shall, therefore, through *courtesy*, bring *them* forward *before* General Gunning's GROOM, who is connected with themselves in a business, not that of *cleaning horses*, it would be fortunate for *them* if it was not of a *more dirty nature*.

To the best of my recollection, this Bowen and his *wife* have been removed from their lodgings at Kensington, to a lodging in Queen-street, May-fair, since the beginning of January. While they were at Kensington

I went

I went several times to enquire after the health of this *most treacherous* woman; she was, or *pretended* to be, exceedingly ill, and I being *really* ill, saw her but once at that house, not being able to get out of my carriage, and twice she dined with us in St. James's-Place.

Captain Bowen I had never seen but once, and that before his marriage had taken place with Miss Lyfter, which was in consequence of the solicitations of General Gunning and the *lady's* parents, to try if I could prevail on them to give up the thoughts of an union, unpleasant to her father and mother; without accomplishing *their* wishes, I have reason to believe I created for *myself* bitter and *revengeful* enemies. Yet I had *then* no cause to suppose they did not take, as sure it ought to have been taken, my *opinion merely*, and delivered with as much tenderness as if addressed to my *own* darling child. They seemed *convinced* by it; but an elopement, or rather a private marriage, that took place a few weeks afterwards, convinced me, if they *had* *gratitude*, they wanted *wisdom*. When I saw Mrs. Bowen, three years after at Kensington, she *appeared* terrified at having incurred my anger, by a breach of the promise
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she had made her parents *through me*. When I met her first at Bath, for it was *there* she picked up her *specious* husband, I assured her, and with that sincerity *from which* I never depart, that however in offending against her *first duties*, she may have given pain or displeasure to me, she must take my visit to her as the proof of a perfect reconciliation on my part; she kissed my hands, and her professions of affection and gratitude were boundless.

Many visits Mr. Bowen made General Gunning in his *own* apartment, after *my* interview with his wife, and sometimes he came into the room where I sat, to ask me how I did? On those occasions he had the *art* to impose so *completely* on my judgment, that I have often told them both, I should never have forgiven myself had the office that was *forced* upon me succeeded, and I *had* been the means of preventing her from being the wife of so *good* a man and so *amiable* a husband. I even pressed her, as she had a *small* estate in her power, not to omit for a day, to make a will in favour of a man, who had, by his *deep hypocrisy*, gained in a very short time so much upon

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my good opinion. And I proposed to them, that I would with their permission, write to her father, and endeavour to bring about a reconciliation between him and them; but before I could put my friendly design into execution the mask was thrown aside, and the *semblance* of every virtue that had attracted my partiality, gave place to an opposite vice. The *transition* was so sudden and *unexpected*, that I was not prepared to meet or oppose the plans that for *many* months, and *long* before these *new agents* could have been *employed*, had with all the *ingenuity* of wickedness, been *secretly* carrying on to blast my fondest hopes, and to bury them beneath the ruins of *maternal* pride and *maternal* happiness. You, my Lord, though *most* friendly, and *most* innocently, was the occasion of my being at the time I speak of thrown *off* my guard, and *lulled* into a security, that *might* have been *more* fatal than God has *permitted* it should be. Yes! my Lord, it was *your* avowed protection of my *heart's treasure*, when I *too* well knew she would find *no protector* in her father; it was *your* expressions of paternal love for *her*, in the notes we had the honour of receiving from your Grace, that made *me* suppose
6 her

her placed *beyond* the reach of those poisoned darts *that I knew* were concealed in the bosoms of *many*, and *some of whom* she called *her friends*; and I knew *too*, that they only waited for a moment *favourable to assassination*, before they discharged them on their *artless victim*.

Oh, my Lord! Why have you deserted the trust *I had* reposed in you? You have been *deceived*, but *should* you have suffered yourself *to be* deceived? You, who have known her heart for so many years, *even* from her earliest infancy, to you I appeal, have you ever perceived any thing like *wickedness* or *fraud*, in the constitution *of her mind*? How *humiliating* the question! An honest slave would think it derogatory to his *honour*, and would blush to ask it! *yet* it is the mother of a persecuted child, who is the *pride*, the *boast*, and the *support* of her life, *that does* propose *this question*, and proposes it with *confidence*, that your Grace will in justice acknowledge, that until that *fatal* morning, the ninth of this month, ever to be commemorated, for the *unnatural crimes* that have *marked* its progress, *she never* gave you cause to accuse her even of *those little foibles*, to which young

people are sometimes subject ; and *now*, not only the *blackest*, but the *meanest* of all charges has been brought against her.

There is a *gradation* in wickedness, my Lord : can a young creature, just turned of twenty-one, who has been the *glory* of her family, *beloved* by her friends, *revered* by her acquaintance, *adored* by the children of poverty, and the *sweet* soother of *distress*, *wherever* or *whenever* it made its claim upon her gentle heart, in *palaces* or in *cottages*, in robes or in rags, still as it was in *distress*, the whole large stock of her *sympathetic* kindness was ever open to its demands :

Can a young creature who *deserves* this character, and that she does *deserve* it, there are many animated witnesses besides her *silent actions*, which have been *uniformly* good and virtuous, from the *earliest* dawn of reason to the *present* hour of her affliction : Can such a being as this, be *supposed* in a few *short months* to forfeit *all* pretensions *even* to *common* honesty, and I may add, to *common* sense ? If she had been the *very* wretch she is represented to be, her *understanding* would have prevented her from
making

making choice of a *fool*, for the *confidant* of her forgeries, and what end were these forgeries to answer? I cannot comprehend it!!!

You are deceived, my Lord, *indeed* you are deceived. For your *own* sake, for the sake of my *injured* darling, who still *honours*, still *loves* you, and sighs to be again acknowledged *by* you, to be restored to your *unbiassed* affection, for *all* our sakes, get at the bottom of this *horrid* mystery, for till you have the goodness by taking *some* pains and *some* trouble, to convince *yourself* of her *perfect* innocence, though *every* tongue besides your *own* should *proclaim* it, she bids me assure your Grace, she shall not think herself *sufficiently* exculpated from her *imputed* guilt, to appear before you.

Had the author of *her* disgrace, and *your* deception, been of any other description than what, *to the shame of human nature* he is, and you could for a moment have believed her guilty on any *less* authority, than that which *must* have *staggered* faith itself, in such a case, she must have ranked you amongst her *enemies*, who, in whatever situation she is

placed, either reduced below, or restored to, her former affluence, will *never* be permitted to approach her. The words *not permitted to approach her*, I am persuaded will be *exceptionable* to some of *my own sex*, who partly compose the circle of *very high fashion*, but I beg it may be understood *by them* as my apology for using it on *this* occasion.

Honour, although with *dignified humility*, delights in performing *for her servants* the least of those offices belonging to her *own* department; yet is *Honour* also jealous, subject to anger, of *extreme haughtiness*; and, when *offended* or *insulted*, will dispute *her* title to homage with *ladies of the first rank*, and *very first pretensions*; I mean only such who, depending on their *own* strength, have *invidiously* or *openly* declared themselves *her* enemies, and the *enemies of Truth*. This is a little *sketch* only, of *my mistress's* disposition; to call Honour my *mistress* has *been*, and ever will *be*, my boast and my glory. I have served her *truely* and *faithfully*, I know all her laws and *follow* them; there is *nothing* so dear to me as *she* is, I would rather sacrifice my child than injure *Honour*. But God be praised! I have never been brought
to

to that *severe* trial! The *duties* of a mother, and the *duties* I perform in the service of Honour, are the stronger for being united.

The *pride* of *Honour* does not resemble female pride, it is quite a different sort of sentiment; nor is *her* anger *like* the anger of fine ladies tinctured with *revenge*. If the face of Honour has been *concealed* from her friends by the *malice* of her *foes*, and it *happens* that one of the *dearest* of her friends, deceived by appearance, should believe this *vision* to be *Guilt*, disguised in the habits of *Honour*, and under *such* a deception, he should have aimed a blow at the *vitals* of *Honour*, she would have immediately *unveiled* her face; she would have said, *what in the name of my daughter, I have now the honour to say to your Grace,* "It was not *me* you *assassinated*, it was *Guilt* you meant to *punish*."

From the beginning of the present month so many *events* have taken place, that I must apply to my *own* memorandums, which I *regularly* and *daily* made, to lay before your Grace such facts as occurred to my *ever watchful* observation. My suspicions of

General Gunning's *intentions* to *impede* the happiness of his daughter, were from the date on which I shall take up the affair. No longer suspicious, *his conduct* had explained them into *certainities*, but to what *extent* he meant to carry his *devices*, I had not the most distant idea. How, could it possibly enter into the imagination of *one* parent, that *another* would have gone the *desperate* lengths *that other* has *since* gone? A *surmise* of the kind would have been *criminal*, it would have been an offence *against* nature! and could not have proceeded from any heart but that *impenetrable one*, whose owner has *perflited* in his *cruel machinations* with effrontery, for which humanity *has no precedent*! I turn with horror from the subject!!!.

MEMORANDUM I.

Feb. 2. "Between eleven and twelve this morning, General Gunning has sent off his groom with a letter, to the ——— of ———, which letter he has written in his dressing-room, but has not shewn the contents to any of his family."

On this *first* memorandum, my Lord, I shall take the liberty to *observe*, that I have omitted, and from motives that none of the *parties concerned* will disapprove, to mention the name of the *respectable* personage to whom the letter was sent, or into *what* county, your Grace being already acquainted with the *particulars* I have suppressed.

My *next* observation on the *above* memorandum is, that the *groom* who was sent *with* the letter is not looked upon as a *family* servant; he *eats* and *sleeps* in the house, but *lives* by day with his horses at the livery-stable, *sometimes* attending *his master* in his rides, and sometimes *any lady who happens* to be under General Gunning's *protection*. I have not seen *this* man more than *three times* since his master brought him back from Ireland, in May last, where he had attended him with other servants; and have never spoke to him but to ask him about his wife and children, who being left in a distant part of the country, compassion had *instigated* me to keep from starving. I have too *much pride*, to say any thing of *my daughter's* knowledge of this wretch.

MEMORANDUM.

MEMORANDUM II.

Feb. 3. Nine o'Clock at night. " General Gunning's groom is just now returned from ———, he brought back a letter for his master; I sent for it, *examined the direction and the seal.* Captain and Mrs. Bowen, my daughter, and sister were present. I told them *some tricks* had certainly been played with the *letter*, and pointed out to *their* observation, that the coronet was *reversed* in the sealing it, and *that* instead of St. James's, it was written on the direction St. James Place. I then gave it to the servant to lay it on his master's table, for General Gunning *was not at home.*

" The seal and the superscription *still floated* on my ideas, I sent for the letter a second time, re-examined it, and then returned it to his dressing-room by the same servant; the whole time, both *first and last*, that this letter was detained *by us*, did not amount to *five minutes*, nor did the servant, who brought it to and carried it from the drawing-room, quit the room till I sent it down by him to be laid on his master's table."

With

With your Grace's permission, I shall as I proceed, continue to make my observations on what has gone before, *article by article*. I am not writing for fame, I write for *more than life or fame*: my *pen* and my *heart* are employed in the vindication of *injured*, of *oppressed* innocence; *that Innocent*, my *own*, my *only*, my *beloved* child. I address myself to the *senses*, and to *all* the amiable passions that *distinguish* the *human* from the *brute* creation; I write to *convince*, and not to *gain applause*.

The letter which General Gunning's groom brought from ———, has been said, and said too by her father, to have been one *dictated* and *written* by my daughter, for the purpose of *imposition*. This accusation amounts to the *direct* charge of forgery, deceit, and a *species* of vanity, that, I should suppose, could never have entered a *female* breast, where the door of folly as well as of vice, had not stood open to receive it.

Laying aside for the present, that *solemn* attestation my *angel* has condescended in more than a common form to make, of her intire innocence of this *diabolical* charge, let us, my Lord,
consider

consider it over *coolly* and *dispassionately*, that those, if *any such there are*, who will not be convinced by a *proof*, of which religion cannot produce a *stronger* test, *may* be persuaded they have been in *an error* by the infallible evidence of their *own* judgement. A copy of the affidavit, sworn before one of his Majesty's justices of the peace, shall be affixed to this letter; and for *this* reason, that by your Grace's silence on the occasion, it is *impossible* to suppose, though sent to Argyll-house, the day on which it was *executed*, that it has ever been *permitted* to reach *your* hands.

Allow me, my Lord, to return again to the subject of my enquiries, and I shall begin with asking your Grace, if *on your conscience* you *think*, that supposing my daughter, or I, or both *together*, had *framed*, *forged*, and sent *this* letter, which was on the groom's return to be delivered by him, as coming from the — of —, that I should have *ordered* it to be brought up to me, and *before* company; that I should be the *first* to discover *there had* been a fraud committed; or that in pointing it out to my daughter's *observation*, which I did, that *she* should have coincided with me in opinion; for

for if *she had* been guilty and *I innocent*, or suppose us *both* culpable, *wickedness* and *folly* do not *always* go hand in hand; surely had we been the *authors* of the fraud, we were not *necessitated* to impeach *ourselves*, we need not have commanded *back* the letter, after having *once* dismissed it, and a second time have examined the *seal* and the *directions* with all the scrutiny of a *too well* authorized suspicion. Should we have done this, my Lord? Should we have put this *disputed* letter into the hands of Bowen and his wife, to help us in *detecting* the fraud if it *must* have fallen on our *own* heads? I did give it to *those wretches* for their opinion; was there any thing like *guilt* in *all* this? Common sense says no. But *common sense*, nor *common honesty* has had any thing to do in the *whole* transaction of an affair, marked only by *folly* and by *infamy*.

Perhaps it may not be *improper* before I proceed further on *this* article, to explain my *reasons* why I sent for the letter to be brought up to me, when the groom returned from ——— or any other place, for his *employers* and himself are the only people who can *really* tell where he had been sent. Why I

ordered this letter, and why I inspected the *seal* and the *directions* with the scrutinizing eyes of suspicion, would, were I to speak to every reason, and to every proof that I can produce, be of *themselves* sufficient to fill a volume, every page of which would be *more* mysterious, and *more* wonderful than another. I shall, therefore, content myself with *averring* to your Grace, that no letter, since last May, has come to me *either* by the *post* or by a *stage-coach*, for I have tryed the conveyance of *both*, but what has been cut across *the seal*, with a hot knife, before I got them. This very day, being the 22d of February, I have received a parcel from Hampshire, in which was *inclosed* a letter, it came *by* the coach, *and* the seal cut across *as usual*.

It may also be necessary before I entirely dismiss the subject of my observations on Memorandum the first, that I should make some addition to those I have already stated. I suppose your Grace has heard *my darling* accused of bribing her *father's* groom, as well as of her *employing* him in the conveyance of her *forgeries*. Had she *forged* the letter from the — of —, *bad* she *prevented* the groom from going to —, *bad* she

she *seduced* him from the *obedience* due to his master, *no doubt* a descent from the *summit* of honour, which had *so many* years been her *residence*, must have been attended with some *difficulties*, and in such an *incumbered* path, and to *so young* a traveller, who had *never before* explored the *beaten* but intricate mazes of *deception*, she would have found *no means* of pursuing her journey *without* the aid of *that conductor* whose assistance on *such* occasions cannot be dispensed with. Where a *groom* is made *useful* to intrigues of *policy*, this *bagatelle* may be admitted. That without a *bribe* there can be no *corruption*, and without *money* there can be no *bribe*. That she *never* has been possessed of money sufficient for *such* undertakings, is not in her *disfavour*; she has ever had *something* for the aid of *goodness*, but nothing for the *support* or *purposes* of *vice*.

Again, my Lord, permit me to ask your Grace another question, by what *magic* she got possession of a *seal*, with the *coronet* and *arms* of *that* family on whom it is *alleged* she has committed this *despicable* fraud; how came she by the coronet and cypher of *another* honourable branch of that *most* honourable house?

house? From any part of *either* family she could not *even* have procured the impressions of *those* seals, because, she does not know any but the *principals* of the family. But admit a *possibility* of her having by some means or other *not to be accounted for*, got the *impressions* of them, for I have not yet heard that *my angel* has been accused of absolutely *stealing* the seals themselves : What a theme is *this* for a *mother's* pen ! Yet it does not *humble* me, on the contrary, I never till *now*, have known the *extent* of my own consequence ; and though *always* proud of *my treasure*, never have I been half so proud as during the time of her *unmerited* and *unheard* of trials ; it is to *them* I owe the discovery of a thousand of *those* perfections of the soul, that adversity, and *adversity only* can call into action.

No, my Lord ! amongst all the *meannesses* of which she has been *supposed* the author, they do not say that she had possessed herself of the *real* seals belonging to the house of ———. But, as I have said before, *admit* there was a possibility of her procuring the impressions of those seals, *where* would have been her advantage ? She was not an engraver,

engraver, that she could cut them *her-
self*; that if any such have been cut for
the occasion, it must have been by an en-
graver, and in that case I should imagine
it not a *very* difficult matter for your Grace
to trace out *who did* cut them, and by
whose orders they were cut. The *deeper* you
have the goodness to dive in this *ocean* of
mysteries, the greater probability there is that
at last you will drag up from the bottom of it,
the *real workers of this iniquitous business*;
conviction must follow your researches; the
weight that cannot fail to oppress your mind
will be removed, you will *rejoice* in her
innocence, though you should feel a pang
that it has been so *long* and so *cruelly* tor-
tured.

In the course of this letter, my Lord, I
have *often* given the clue into your Grace's
hand. You well know what *my* sentiments
have *long* been, and I sincerely wish to avoid
every *publick* explanation that does not *im-
mediately* tend to *effectually* remove *not only* the
imputation of *crimes*, but the *smallest* blemish,
that has been wantonly ascribed to a character
immutable as truth, and *immaculate* as infancy;
not a speck shall be suffered to remain. I

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will

will sacrifice *nothing* to *hate* or to *revenge*, but *every* thing to assassinated honour and persecuted goodness; had I nearer ties than *nature*, or the *laws* have instituted, I would break through them *all* on an occasion like *this*. *She*, who would joyfully lay down her life in the cause she has undertaken, can she be an *uninterested*, a meer *looker-on*, and see the *dearest* of all her *soul* holds dear made a *victim* to the *arts* and *stratagems* of an insidious——? add, my Lord, the name that *must* fill up this horrid blank—for you know it.

On the night the D—of——'s letter was brought by General Gunning's groom, as it was *supposed* from B——m, his master did not return from his evening amusements 'till about one o' clock; does it not strike your Grace as *at least* a *remarkable* circumstance, that at such a time as this, on which I may almost say the happiness of his only child in a manner was depending, (for, if he had written the *letter which he says* he did write to the D—of——how much of *his*, of *her's*, and of *my* happiness, must inevitably have hung on the answer he should have the honour to receive from his G——?) and when he *knew* this answer was to be received that *very* evening, I ask, if it was not rather
strange

Strange that he should *choose* to sup from home, that he should be as indifferent to the return of his messenger as if *he* was in *no* manner concerned about the business on which he had sent him to B——m, and though he said in his family that he *expected* his groom back at *eight* o'clock, that he should afterwards stay out himself 'till *one*, and not leave orders to have this *important* letter sent to him, either in *Harley-street* or *Soho-square*, for to one or other of those places *all* his evenings were *dedicated*; nor did he once send his servant to St. James's-Place to *enquire* if the groom was come back, which seems to argue a sort of apathy *he* is not at all liable to on *other* occasions; neither is he deficient in *curiosity*; and had the contents of the expected letter been *entirely new* to him, I am *persuaded* it would not have remained on his dressing table from *nine* 'till *one* o'clock, like an old book, the subject of which he was *perfect* master of; or *more* properly I might have said like a book of which *he knew* himself to be *the* author, or at *least* one of the *authors*.

My bed room was next the street, the knocking at the door when he came home awakened me; I heard him get out of the

carriage, and it drove off; in another minute the hall-door was opened with great caution, it arrested my attention, and immediately after a coach drove into the place; I heard the step let down, and it drove back again most furiously; there was nobody up in the house at this time but his *own man*, whom he *charged* not to say he was gone out, if any enquiries should be made. I found afterwards that he went to Argyll-house with the *disputed*—or for brevity sake you must allow me to call it *his*, or *their's*, or *any* body's letter, and that he left it with your Grace; that he *was* in your apartment on *that* night, I do not mean as *information*, but, perhaps, my lord, you do not *also* know that it was *not* for your Grace that he *first* enquired; no! it was for *two others* in your family, but *all* were gone to bed, and *then* he was shown to your Grace's room.

The servant waited his master's return in the porter's hall, the door was opened without knocking, and he went up to his chamber *so softly* as not to be heard by any body but myself. The groom slept in a garret immediately over my room, and after General Gunning was in bed, I heard his man go up
to

to the groom and their voices too I could hear very distinctly. The message, as I am informed, that he carried to this *wretch* from his master was to *charge* him not to say any thing about B——or his journey to that place, until he had seen him, and orders that he should come next morning to his bed-side by seven o'clock.

The command to his groom of being silent on the subject of his journey to B——m, came *too late*, for I found by my own servant, whilst she was waiting in my room the night of the groom's return from B——m, that he had been entertaining his companions below stairs with a *long*, but, certainly, not a *true* account of his *whole* expedition.

MEMORANDUM III.

Feb. 4. "General Gunning was in my daughter's room this morning before she was up, and informed her he had *received* a charming letter from the D—of——, which he had left with the duke of Argyll, and also told her he had been last night at Argyll-house for that purpose, and would

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take her with him there, that she might see it as soon as she was dressed; she has been at Argyll-house for that purpose, and this most charming letter has been shewn to her, and my heart partakes in her joy, though I have not seen the contents but she has repeated them to me as nearly as she can remember them; I am as much transported with her happiness, as if I had and (as her mother) I ought to have been, consulted on every step that has been taken; but should General Gunning really mean to act now fairly by my heart's treasure, if he no longer works under ground to impede her felicity, I will forgive all his past reserves, although under the severity of their pressure I have been suffering the pains of torture for so many months. — If he is not conscious that *his* wishes are opposed to *my* wishes, on a point where both should be equally interested, why does he throw out so many dark hints, and never speak to me with confidence or kindness, why not shew the D—of——'s letter to me, if every thing is really coming to a crisis—there is yet a darkness in his conduct that I do not comprehend. Another circumstance gives me suspicion;—he has been this

this day examining the servant who brought the letter up stairs, very closely, whether we looked much at the seal, and at the direction, and how long we kept it the first and second time that we sent for it.—Surely he knows me too well, not to know that I should on no occasion condescend to open any letter that was not directed to myself—what then can he mean by being so inquisitive!—’tis very odd—I do not like it—I have been so long in a scene of mysteries, of which he is the artificer, that I never expect to get out of them as long as I live!”

These, my Lord Duke, are the whole contents of my third memorandum; *you know* at *that* time, and *long* before, what had been my *fears*, my *sufferings*, and my *sorrows*, and with what watchful *caution* I observed and followed the intricate and retrograde motions that threatened the blow, when it only shewed itself at a distance; I appeal only to truths, and to your Grace, in this my just, upright, and honest vindication; it is only the consideration of its being *just*, *upright*, and *honest*, that supports and enables me to *enter* upon, and *shall* carry me *through* an undertaking,

which, for distressing circumstances, and distressing situations, as a wife and a mother I hope has never fallen to the lot of any woman until it became my own. I can have no choice how I am to act when I ask myself this question; shall I protect goodness, or shall I leave it to the destruction of evil? Promises and threats have not been omitted to turn me from my determined purposes; what these promises and threats are composed of shall appear before I finish the painful task necessity has imposed on me, as an indispensable duty.

I do not think it necessary, my Lord, to annex my animadversions on the contents of my third memorandum, because the *only* observations I could *now* make, were made *by me* at the time the circumstances occurred; I beg your Grace to honour the perusal of them with a *moment* of *serious* consideration, recollect also the situation of *my* mind, *for you know* what it was when I saw the storm *only* at a *distance*, and *long* before it bursted like forked lightening on our defenceless heads.—*You know*, my Lord, how *heavily* I have been oppressed by the *horrors* of suspense

pence and apprehensions, *and* that my *apprehensions* were not the growth of a *day*, a *week*, or a *month*. I had *long* looked into *that* mind, which has since taught its possessor to *realize* what before was suspicion, into a dark, a *dreadful* certainty. I repeat it, my Lord Duke, that *you know* how *great* was my *caution*, how *indefatigable* my researches; for to your Grace, at *different* times, I have revealed in writing *every* thought of my heart. *Your* extreme fondness for my amiable child, and the *tender* interest you was taking in whatever *concerned* the establishment of her happiness, invited *me* to the freedom of reposing in your Grace my most *unlimited* confidence; an honour you permitted me, and did not seem displeased at my using this your indulgence on all critical occasions. I am at last arrived to memorandum the fourth.

On the evening of which day, the plots of my daughter's enemies and my own had opened, on my understanding, so *largely*, and oppressed my heart so *heavily*, that, when I threw my thoughts as usual on paper, it was only in these words.

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MEMORANDUM IV.

Feb. 5. " This day has opened a scene of *premeditated* villainy, the *agents* of which are *Bowen* and his wife ; and such a conversation has passed between *that Woman* and myself, as I shall not notice here, being impressed upon my memory, and *never* to be erased from thence."

Before I have the honour of bringing forward circumstantially as I mean to do, the *events* of *Saturday the 5th of February*, I shall, with your Grace's permission, explain to you on what sort of footing those *Bowens* were received into my family, and how *artfully* they maintained their posts until it was *convenient* for their *destructive* measures to throw off their disguise, and to disclose themselves in their real and *monstrous* forms. I would have used instead of real the term natural, but nature would have blushed had I profaned *her name*, by bestowing it on such people, or annexing it to such unnatural purposes!!!

Removing *themselves*, or what is still more likely, *being* removed by *others* from Ken-
 6 *sington*

ington to *London*, the better to accomplish the work of wickedness they have submitted to be *employed* upon, they signified to me the day they should come to town; I forget what day it was, and only remember, that it was early in the month of January, and that they called in St. James's-Place immediately on their arrival.—From that time, until they sprung the *Mine* of all their mischiefs, I *behaved* to them with every possible kindness, whilst General Gunning *appeared* to treat them with that *acknowledging* sort of negligence, that can hardly be *tortured* into the term civility, but will easily admit of *another* word, and *one* that for ever must belong to the *whole committee of perjured associates*, I mean contempt. This *studied* conduct produced all its *effects*. I redoubled my attentions, and thrown off my guard, I suffered myself to be deceived by their *artful* contrivance, and really in my own thoughts blamed General Gunning for that want of *kindness* to his *relations*, which I endeavoured to atone for by the friendship with which I always received them.—How artfully was conducted the Tragedy they were engaged in, and how well supported were all their parts! Bowen's wife once gave General Gunning a
very

very *spirited*, and I thought a very *proper* rebuke, for his having called (*as she chose to say*) at their door, without enquiring if they were at home. Before this I thought her a *tame foolish* woman, but I *now* changed my opinion; in short, for some weeks I was the dupe of them all, nor do I charge myself with want of penetration that I was deceived, for in all the *mysterious* and *ingenious* devices of which *they have been* the contrivers, *this* is the *only* one that appears to me to have been carried on with even *common* understanding, though of uncommon *cunning* and uncommon *villainy* there has been no *deficiency*.

Mrs. Bowen is remarkable for *one* accomplishment, I mean her masterly performance on the harpsichord; and my daughter, about a fortnight before she was driven from St. James's Place, having engaged Signior Quilici to instruct her in singing, embraced with pleasure this woman's offer to accompany her, and give her lessons in the absence of her master; nobody was more capable of improving a learner in that science than herself; her fingers command the sweetest sounds of harmony, but it proceeds from her *fingers only*, it has nothing to do with that sort of
musick

musick so elegantly *distinguished* by Shakspeare, it is quite of *another* description; the *soul* has no *connection* with the powers *she* possesses.

When I wished Mr. and Mrs. Bowen to dine with us, we either called at the door of her lodgings to take her up, or else sent the carriage to fetch her, and after supper she generally went home in my daughter's chair. I shall not dwell longer on this subject, it is quite enough that my daughter's attestation, subjoined to this letter, will sufficiently elucidate to every man and every woman, who would *not themselves* be guilty of perjury, *what* was the nature of her acquaintance with this disgraceful character, for a disgrace she is to her *sex*, to *religion*, and to *humanity*. I shall now have the *gratification* of presenting to your Grace these *incomparable* Machiavelians in the plain *unimbellished* livery of truth.

Saturday, Feb. 5. My Sister, my Darling, and myself, returning about three o'clock from the Park, called at Mrs. Bowen's House, and sent up a message to ask if they would dine with us; the *wife* came down and placed herself in the carriage, making an apology for
her

her *Husband*, who she said was gone into the country, or would have been *very* happy to have accepted my invitation.—The time before dinner was as usual passed at the Piano Forte; the musical *assassin* playing, and the *innocent* victim singing, or, rather I should have said, *attempting* to sing.

General Gunning dined at home that day; I did not go down to dinner, nor had I done so for several days before, being exceedingly ill and languid: the ladies came up to me about seven o'clock, leaving General Gunning below, and the carriage waiting to carry him out; we had not been together more than ten minutes, when Mr. Bowen joined us in the drawing room: I told him I was sorry we had not the pleasure of his company at dinner; his reply was, that he had been in the city; and I said without any meaning, Mrs Bowen informed me you was gone into the country; he smiled, and replied, he had been so *far* into the city that it may be almost called the country: soon after a message was brought up to Mr. Bowen from General Gunning, with his compliments, and that he wished to speak to him; when he came back to us, which was a in few minutes,

I sig-

I signified that I was alarmed at the message, and begged he would tell me what General Gunning had wanted with him, for I had *then* fears of a very *serious* nature. After some hesitation, he said, it was only to ask him for five guineas, it being too late to send to his banker. I shook my head, and told him I did not believe a word of the matter, for that two days before I had seen him take out of his pocket a letter, at least what I thought was a letter, but on its being opened I had observed that it contained a number of bank bills, and that the envelope was blank paper. Mr. Bowen assured me *upon his honour*, which at *that* time I had no *reason* to doubt was *sterling* honour, that he had told me the *real* business for which he was called down, and I was *satisfied*. General Gunning soon after went out to his evening appointments, my sweet injured Angel was gone to sit an hour with her beloved Protectress the Duchess of B——, Mrs. Bowen at her musick, my sister and Mr. Bowen playing at picquet, and myself at work; we were thus disposed of, when Mrs. Bowen, rising hastily, and taking up a candle, looked at my sister as if she would have said *follow me*; the hint, tho' *lost* on me, was understood

understood by the person to whom it *was* directed; she laid down her cards, made an apology to Mr. Bowen, and went out of the room; it was more than a quarter of an hour before they came back again; and looking in their faces I saw confusion in that of *the most* treacherous of Women, though a good deal concealed by the *convenient* black curtain that in part covered the *crimson* of guilt from *my* inspection; whilst the pale and agitated countenance of my sister spoke the plain truth, and told me in language I could not misunderstand something disagreeable *had* happened; hardly had I time to recollect myself, before Mrs. Bowen proposed to her husband that he should go for an hour to the coffee-house, and return to us again. The plan being laid before the Incendiares met in St. James's-Place, they *perfectly* understood *each other*, and taking up his Hat he disappeared; when my sister said it would be highly proper Mrs. Bowen that you should *now* repeat to *Mrs. Gunning* what you have been telling *me*: for God's sake, said I, what is the matter! do not alarm yourself, my sister replied; Mrs. Bowen will tell you *all*; some devil has been forging a letter to *her* in the *name* of our darling here. I must observe,
that

that I never beheld such *expressions* of guilt and *confusion* as overwhelmed the wretch before me; for though I was *by no means* free from agitation, I *fixed* my eyes on her face, whilst I *requested* her not to keep me in suspense; I *repeated* my intreaties *so often*, that at last with a *seeming* reluctance, and *seeming* tenderness, she opened the *diabolical commission*.

“ Oh my dearest Mrs. Gunning! you
 “ have been *deceived*! you are *cheated*! you
 “ are *abused*! and I fear, when you know
 “ all, it will *kill* you; it will be the *death*
 “ of you. I owe you more than my mo-
 “ ther, and I love you better than I loved
 “ her; how then can I kill you by telling
 “ you, your daughter is a *wretch*! ”

Had I been *less* acquainted with *that* heart, which I have the *glory* to say, under the goodness of God, has been of my *own* forming, had I not been the *conductor* of *all* her actions, and the *Repositor* of *all* her thoughts—Had I not been the *joyful* witness of a life of *purity*, *honour*, and *rectitude*, passed under my own *immediate* inspection, and *which* had not *even* been marked with

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the *common* failings of her sex—had I not felt that I should have been content that *my own* soul should have answered for *her* transgressions, I might, as this assassin threatened, and very probably I should, have fallen the *instant* martyr of her devices. On the *contrary*, I now with the most *undisturbed* composure assured her it was *she* that had been *imposed* upon, and begged *she* would proceed with *as much calmness* to relate as I was prepared to *listen*; that she had nothing to fear on my account, either for my *life* or for my *repose*, from the consequences of *any* intelligence she could possibly give me. Whilst I was saying this I *observed* her looks, which, contrary to their usual silence, spoke *some sort of* meaning, and which I have since *construed* into the language of *mortification*, on finding *this* her *first* essay had met with so little success; however, encouraged I suppose by the *mildness* of my manner to *her*, and by my telling her *she* had been imposed upon, she returned to her charge, and taking shelter behind the banner of honest meaning, under its *stolen* colours, she tried to conceal the *real* baseness of her intentions. With effrontery *never* to be equalled on *such* an occasion, the *Crocodile* caught hold of my hands,
often

often kissed them, and pretended, to cry over them, lamenting that to *save me* from further imposition, she *must sacrifice* my daughter. - Mr. Bowen and herself, she said, had been nearly *distracted* on my account, by the knowledge they had come at of the double part the *wicked creature* was acting— There was now nothing I so much wished for after this *glimpse* of the business as to get to the very *bottom* of it; I therefore concealed my *resentment*, and desired her to explain *what she meant*, that by the nature of her accusations I might be able to form my *own* opinion.

In consideration, my Lord Duke, of the heavy tax I am going to lay on your patience, I would willingly give your Grace the *substance* only of this Woman's information, but in justice to *all* the parties that *are* concerned, or *may* concern themselves in *or* about the *iniquitous transactions*, that are the subject of this letter, however tedious I am forced to be, I must, to throw a light on *darkness* like *this*, be clear and *explicit*, and bring *every* circumstance that I am acquainted with before your Grace *plain* and unaltered.

The calmness with which I made my request to Mrs. Bowen, that she would proceed with her information, took off from her every fear of my displeasure, and with all the assurance of *guilt* she began to *inforce* what she had before advanced. My dearest Mrs. Gunning, said she, *how dreadfully* have you been imposed upon, *every body* is combined to deceive *you*, and the mysteries that have so long made you *miserable*, are *all* created by Miss Gunning's *artful* conduct; indeed, indeed, my dear Mrs. Gunning, though you think she is to marry L—d B——— do not set your heart upon it; she *never* will marry him.—How do you know this, said I;—because, replied she, Miss Gunning will marry L—d L——— and not L—d B———. From what authority do you declare it, Mrs. Bowen? because, returned she, about five days ago *she* wrote *me* a letter, in which she tells *me* what I now tell *you*, and in this letter there was inclosed one from the D— of ———— to her father, which she desired I would get Mr. Bowen to copy *for her*; and she desires me not to mention *the report*, which I must certainly have heard, as it was known over the *whole town*, that she was to be married to L—d L———

This letter, Mrs. Bowen, *was* not of my daughter's writing; *some body* has written to you *in her name*; the contents are a *direct* contradiction of *her sentiments*.—She insisted that *it was* of Miss Gunning's *writing* and *sending*, which she *confirmed* by an asseveration *not common* from the lips of a female.—I did not *exactly* say that she had sworn to a *falsehood*, but *still* held to *my* assertion, that my daughter *had no hand* in the letter *she* had received.

Finding that by *all* her *protestations* she could not inforce *my* belief, or gain her *own* ends, *whatever they were*, by means of the letters, she said, that at all events, though, she must give up Miss Gunning *intirely*, she was determined to *open my eyes* to her *duplicity* and *wickedness*. The reply I made to her was *exactly* in these words: And why should *you* hesitate, Mrs. Bowen, *to give her up*, for if she is *so* guilty a creature, surely *her* friendship is not *worth* preserving; surely *she* who can forfeit *all* claims to *honour* and *delicacy*, who can throw off the *duty* and *affection* she owes a mother, who has adored *her*, cannot be *expected* to perform any *good* action, *or* to be capable of *one friendly office*.

This my answer to her *ill collected* and *worse connected* allegations, seemed, greatly to please her; she agreed *intirely* with my opinion, and assured me she would *in future* despise Miss Gunning's friendship, and give up *every thing* to me without reserve.— This was *just the point* I wanted to bring her to; for *whoever* had laid the *horrible plan*, I wished at one view to overlook the *extent* of it, but *that* I have *since* found to be beyond the powers of *mortal sight* or mortal penetration.

Now, my dear Mrs. Gunning, continued this *human monster*, to *strengthen* what I have told you about the *two* letters Miss Gunning sent to me; *one* of which she desired me to get Mr. Bowen to copy; I *will* tell you what she *has* said to me *this very day*, and *then* you *cannot* doubt the truth of *all* that I have been saying.— Go on, said I, and *conceal* nothing, it is for my *security* that I *should* know *all*, that I may be able to *defend myself* against my *enemies*; there was no *ambiguity* whatever in this reply, it came *from my heart*; but *she* did not take it in the *real* sense, but in the sense *I wished* she might take it.—Again the *incendiary* poured out the *warmest* professions
of

of *Love*, reverence, and compassion, for her dearest Mrs. Gunning, for her *more than mother*, as she was pleased to call me, and again she kissed my hand.— I did not *immediately* withdraw it, but felt as if it had been *fascinated* on by a *serpent*.

What a *wretch*, what a *complete* wretch, is this *vile* daughter of your's, said she; to have been *so long* carrying on *such a scene* of deception as has almost *destroyed* you; and *so* I have told her *this very day*.— When and where Mrs. Bowen did you tell her so? First, at the Piano Forte, returned she; and afterwards on the stairs as we came up to you from the dining room. I first said to her, for *shame!* for *shame!* Miss Gunning; *how can* you impose so on your mother, *how can* you appear to her to carry on the affair with Lord B——— and yet resolve to marry Lord L———? What was her reply, I asked. — Why, returned she, *that I* knew she was determined to marry Lord L———, and *nothing* should turn her, but that she was *afraid* to tell her Mamma——; and what did you say to her again on the stairs, Mrs. Bowen? I said, Miss Gunning, you *are* killing your dear good mother by *inches*, and if

you do not tell her the abominable part you are acting, Mr. Bowen and I are come to a resolution, *for the sake of your mother*, to tell her of it *ourselves*, for if we keep your secret *she* will lose her *life*.—This, said I, was *very* home *indeed*; could she say *nothing* in defence of herself?——O las! *no*, replied she, in a quick and pert voice, *nothing* in the *world* but poh! poh! never *mind* that.—Has any other conversation passed between you and her to day Mrs. Bowen, said I, on the *same* subject? if there *has* tell me; you see I am possessed of great *strength* of mind, and I appeal to yourself if you ever saw me *more composed*; though to be sure I have been very much *surprized*, and even *shocked* as much as it is the power of *wickedness* to shock *me*! she did not see herself reflected on, but my *dear*, my *innocent* lamb, in the word *wickedness*; and thinking she had gained a *complete* victory over my *credulity*, she *flattered* my understanding, *even* at its *own* expence, for I *must* have been a fool *indeed* if I had given *credit* to what she *pretended* had passed *between them* at the Piano Forte, because I was sitting close by them the whole time, and not a *word* or a *whisper* could have *escaped* my ear; and for that part of the
ready-

ready-made conversation, which she said had passed upon the stairs, it is enough for me to say that my sister came out of the dining-room, and up stairs with them, and not a syllable was uttered on that or any other subject.

To my question of what further might have passed between them on that day, Mrs. Bowen made the following answer. I forgot, my dear Mrs. Gunning, to tell you of it before, that when Miss Minifie went up to ask you how you did after dinner, and *before* she returned again to us, General Gunning, Miss Gunning and myself, being left by ourselves, the General said *something* that *must* convince you that *your* daughter is acting *the very part I have told you*.— I begged to know what that something was.— Why, replied she, as soon as Miss Minifie was gone out of the room, General Gunning began to say what a very handsome letter that was he had received from the D—— of ———, notwithstanding it *contained* this reflection, that *his* G—— *wished* the General and his daughter had known their own minds *sooner*, for as his son L——d B——— was indisposed, and had a very strong

strong affection for Miss Gunning, he was *afraid* the disappointment would affect him very *seriously*. When I repeated this part of Mrs. Bowen's curious collection of reports to my daughter on her return that evening from the duchess of B——'s, it was *arranged* on the same catalogue of *falsehoods* that had gone before it, *for* not a *word* had passed in the short absence of my sister from the table about the D—— of ———, L——d B—— or any letter whatever.

When Mrs. Bowen mentioned the D——'s letter, and General Gunning's remarks on it, which she had *before* concerted or *fabricated* at the *moment*; it is *impossible*, said I, being a little off my guard, that Mr. Gunning could have said *this* of the D—— of ———'s letter, the duke of Argyll has shewn it to my daughter, and she has not mentioned to me any thing *like* what *you* inform me of *now*; on the contrary, his G——'s letter is perfectly polite and satisfactory.

Oh my dear Mrs. Gunning! she exclaimed, indeed you are *deceived*, you are *cheated* by *them all*, the Duke of Argyll, Miss Gunning,

ning, and every one of them, are deceiving you, she is to marry Lord L—— it is contrived amongst them, and every body is helping on the match.

Her violence recovered me from the false step I had made, it forced me to collect myself; and as to get at the possession of the letters she had pretended to have received from my daughter five days before, *was* what I aimed at, I again threw out the tub to the whale, by pretending to swallow all her absurdities.— I am apt to believe the honourable party who employed her, as an *acting* partner in their dark work, did not give her a commission to go quite such lengths as she in her *wisdom* had thought fit to go; if they did, I shall *advise* them when they *next* undertake to destroy the happiness of a wife and a daughter, whether of their own or any other family, that they look out for an *agent*, who is to take so *capital* a share in the business, of rather a *better understanding* than Mrs. Bowen's, least their *own* should be called in question; but in *the present case* to take away any imputation of the kind, I *will* allow, *that* before *she* was taken in to assist the

other conductors, nothing of *evil* was ever *managed* with greater address than this *plan of destruction*; I mean from *its very first arrangement*. I do not boast of particular penetration in having detected Mrs. Bowen in her *onset* of treachery, because a child of twelve years old might have seen through her as clearly as I did; but having discovered her treachery, I gave myself *some credit* for the *more* than Job's patience with which I dived to the *bottom* of it, and had she not been *greatly* supported, the *very means* she used would have defeated *the ends* for which she used them; but *so supported*, I have *hitherto* but in *part* been able to parry their blows of mischief.—I shall not interrupt my recital, or trouble your Grace with another observation of my own, until I come to the conclusion of Mrs. Bowen's *intelligences*. Every circumstance of which she thought it proper to *confirm* by pledging a soul, *the value which by this time* I should imagine your Grace must fully comprehend.

On the subject of the *contrivances* which she averred were carrying on by *your Grace*, my *daughter*, and *others*, to *complete her marriage* with L—d L—— and to *break off* the treaty with
with

with L—d B——, Mrs. Bowen was *particularly* elaboate, and particularly *strong* in her *asseverations* of *its* truth, and when I replied, Mrs. Bowen whatever *you* may think of *my* daughter, however culpable *she* may appear to you, *suppose* her divested of all *delicacy* or *honour*, yet I cannot *but* hope that in the Duke of Argyll I have *not* been *mistaken*; you must have been *misinformed* at least in *what* concerns *him*, and I must *still* think myself and my daughter *honoured* in his friendship, and *safe* under his protection.—This was her answer:—upon my S— it is true that *he* is the *worst* of *all* your *enemies*, and except Miss Gunning's *own* wickedness, nothing can *exceed* the Duke of Argyll's: I could here scarcely forbear giving her *one* of *those* smiles that wears the livery of *incredulity* and *contempt*, but getting the better of my inclination, because I had not yet got *the* letters from her, I put on rather a look of *conviction* than one of *unbelief*, and turning to the table on which my writing materials always stood, and, as if *perfectly* convinced of my daughter's *misconduct*, I wrote such a letter to her, as I most certainly *should* have written without any *finesse* whatever, had she *really* deviated from the *paths* of *delicacy* and *truth*; in that case
 she

she should have found no *other* support from me than what *compassion*, and *compassion merely*, has a *claim* to; but *convinced* that of *all* amiable *beings* she is the most *amiable*, my *last* breath shall go out in her *vindication*, and my *last* embrace shall be *hers*.

After I had written my *seemingly* severe letter, in *which* I had taken my leave of her *for ever*, I read it to Mrs. Bowen, *who* not only *approved* of it, but honoured, or *rather* dishonoured, the *contents*, with *such* repeated, and warm encomiums, that had I not found her out *before*, her mind on *this occasion* would have appeared to me in all the colouring of *deformity* and *malice*.

If she ever *has* courage to look at her *own true picture* in this my faithful representation to your Grace, though she may perhaps *unblushingly* pass over the *wickedness* of her conduct, yet for her *folly* she certainly *must* feel, for none, *except a simpleton*, but must have discovered their own detection.—She *saw* me writing and afterwards I read to her *the letter*, which *was* to throw off *the darling* of my heart, to take an *eternal farewel* of that *child*, on whom my life *has hung* from the hour of her birth,

birth, and all *this* without a *tear* of *disappointment*, or a *sigh* of *anguish*; I am not at all conscious that I did not go through the whole task with exactly the same *indifference*, as I should have *written* a ballad or *read* a paragraph in the news papers *concerning* the national debt. It answered the ends *I hoped* it would; *she* thought me *securely* fixed in her *Trap*, and so far from refusing me the letters when I asked her to let me see them, she seemed *concerned* that she had not got them about her, offering to *send* home for them or to go and *fetch* them herself, with as little apprehension *as if* I had been *one* of her *own destructive* agents. I refused to give her this trouble, and told her as it was so late, tomorrow would do as well, in the mean time I would have *her* go home, as what *must* pass between my daughter and me, when she came back from the Duchesse of B——, *I thought* could afford *her* no pleasure.

I saw she was *rejoiced* at my dismissing her, for how *can* the *assaulter* of innocence meet its *serene* unsuspecting looks, whilst the *dagger* is yet in the *assassin's* hand, ready for *further* mischief.

But

But before she could lay hold of my permission, the knocking at the door announced the return of my darling; *never* have I seen any thing like her *fright* and her *confusion*, she wanted to hide herself in the next drawing-room to that in which we were sitting, but I told her she had better pass her on the stairs, and borrow her chair to take her home; she took my advice, and flew down, leaving the door open as she went out, by *which means* I heard my *beloved* say to her upon the stairs, where are you going in such a hurry Mrs. Bowen? home, said the vile woman; will you be so good as to lend me your chair?—to be sure, replied she; but why not stay to supper?—By this time the other was in the hall and called out—go up to your mother, she wants you.

Having got rid of my *mischievous* visitor, and released your Grace from a *very* tedious, but a *very necessary* relation, I shall not trouble you with the conversation that ensued in our *little* circle, composed *only* of a *daughter*, a *mother*, and an *aunt*, whose hearts were *more* closely cemented by a *tryed* and *well founded* confidence in each other's *rectitude*, than by the *natural* ties that have united them.

The

The result of our consultation on Mrs. Bowen's *extraordinary embassy* from the *lower regions* was this—I dispatched a short note to her couched in terms through which she could not see how *well* I knew her, and *how much* I despised her; I am sorry I did not keep a copy but it was the thought of *one* moment, and another carried it from the House.—The purport of it was, that I had the pleasure to assure her that my daughter was an angel, that the letters she had received were certainly sent with no good intent by some secret enemy, and I could not *but hope* every thing else had *proceeded* from the *same* source to *injure* my daughter, and to *impose* on *her* and Mr. Bowen; that I was sure *they* must rejoice that I was *quite* satisfied myself, and should *undeceive* them the next *morning*, *when* I would call upon them and talk over the affair.

After this letter was sent away, the servant being told he was not to wait for an answer, we again and *again* tryed to account for the part Mrs. Bowen was acting, and we had but *one* opinion amongst us, *that she was employed* on the business by some body, and that whatever was the *motive*, it was taken

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up

up with *too much violence* to be easily relinquished.

My daughter proposed going *immediately* to your Grace, from whom *no thought* of her pure heart had been concealed, to *tell* you what had happened, and to take *your directions* how we were to proceed, so as that we might *detect* the confederacy which we could have no doubt *had been* formed, or was *forming* against her.—It was then so late, that with some difficulty I dissuaded her from going to your Grace that night; she was *not* for delaying it to the *next* morning, till I told her I should by *that* time have got into *my* possession the letters from Mrs. Bowen, and that it would be much better to lay them before you when she opened the conversation that had passed *about her*, between *that woman* and myself.

My reasons at length conquered *her* impatience to apply to your *fatherly* tenderness for advice that very night. *Innocence* was the tranquil companion of *her* pillow, the *Idea* of Mrs. Bowen's treachery did not forsake *me* the whole night, and no shepherd, who fees the favourite lamb of his bosom in the
wolf's

wolf's grasp, could have suffered *what I did* at the first approach of danger that *threatened* my darling.

In the morning General Gunning went out in the carriage, and left a message that he would send it back by one o'clock, but to my most *severe* disappointment he did *not* do what he *said* he would, and without the coach we could not go to Mrs. Bowen's.

This *memorable* day, *Sunday the sixth of February*, Mr. and Mrs. Bowen have *fixed* to on *barter* their ETERNAL SALVATION, but to *what* end or for *what* reward, it is only the *purchasers*, and the *purchased*, that can ascertain; that they *have* sworn, and to the following *exact* effect, is *no* mystery; *though* the *cause* and the *price* of their *oaths* must remain enveloped.—They both *sware*, that on the sixth of February instant Miss Gunning *came* to *their* lodgings, and that she *there* wrote *two* letters, requesting that *they* might be shewn to *me*, and that *these* letters were *inclosed* and delivered to *me* when I called the *same* day on Mrs. Bowen.

F 2

Before

Before I account to your Grace, which I mean to do, in the most *unequivocal* manner, for *every* hour of my daughter's *time* on this *ever* to be remembered day, the sixth of February, I shall request you, my Lord, to look back to the conversation of the *pre-
ceding* evening, the fifth of February; *in
which* conversation this MISTRESS BOWEN tells me, *confidentially*, that she has received *two* letters, *one* of them from Miss Gunning, *desiring* she, Mrs. Bowen, would *not* mention to her mama the report that was *so much* about town, *that* she was to be married to L—d L——— and that the *other* letter Mr. Bowen was requested to copy. *When* these letters *appear*, as they *shall* do in their *proper place*, I beg your Grace will give yourself the trouble to *compare* that addressed to Mrs. Bowen from my daughter, *with* what Mrs. Bowen averred to my sister and myself, to be the contents *of that* letter; though I have already taken some notice of this *one little mistake*, I must again *point it out* and repeat; this letter, Mrs. Bowen *verbally* declared, requested that she, Mistress Bowen, *would not* mention to mama the reports about town concerning the *writer's* marriage with L—d L——— *whereas* the letter itself *desires* the reports

reports *may* be hinted to mama, and by those *very kind friends themselves*.—Poor woman! I don't say it was not from *inclination* that she made this *first error*. I am myself a witness how *indefatigable* she was in *performing* the *duties* to which she *was appointed*; but there is *this* to be said in *excuse* for her negligence, when she fell into this *little mistake*, that though guilt may not *destroy* the *memory* it certainly *confuses* it.

I shall now, my Lord Duke, *account* to your Grace for *every* hour of Sunday the sixth of February, *where* and *with whom*, and in *what manner* it was *really passed* by my daughter; which the *evidences* of her attendants, during *the whole* of that day, will *substantiate*, and of course *invalidate* the *perjured depositions* of her *father's relatives*, and her *father's friends* the Bowens.

I have already observed that on the sixth of February, General Gunning went out in the carriage, leaving a message, that he should send it back by one o'clock, *and* that to our *great disappointment* it did not return at the time appointed.—*From* the hour of my daughter's getting up to breakfast, she did not

leave the room a moment where *her aunt* and *I* were sitting; and about half an hour after twelve (she said) perhaps papa will not send home the coach so soon as he promised, I have a mind to walk to the Duchess of B—— when the carriage comes you may call for me there, we will then go to Mrs. Bowen's and get the letters, I will afterwards set you down and go myself to Argyll-House. Her chairmen not being in the way as they were accustomed never to come for orders 'till four in the afternoon, and the weather being good, I made no objection to her proposal, and attended by her own footman, John Dean, she set out on foot for Pall-Mall, to pay her duty to her *most* dear and revered patroness, from whose *affectionate heart* the endeavours of her enemies *have not been able* to get *her* dismissed; that *kind* patroness, that *steady* friend, to *whom* she is indebted for the *most honourable support* in this time of her *unmerited* tryals; that *tender* protectress, *whose* endearing attentions *have been*, and *still are*, her *solace* and her *comfort*, that beloved benefactress whose *house* has received her, whose *arms* have sheltered her when driven both from the *house* and *arms* of her *most UNFATHERLY father!*—This is the *only* part

part of my narrative on which I have shed a tear—it is the tribute of *gratitude*, of *love*, I had almost said of *adoration*!—My darling stayed with the Duchess of B——, *as was* every morning her *custom* to do, about an hour and a half; and *then* to prevent her being too much tired by walking home, her Grace had the goodness to send her back in her own chair.—The first question she asked, when she returned to us, *was*, if the coach was sent home; I told her, no. Upon which she said then I will take the Duchess of Be——'s chair, and go to Argyll-House, for I shall not be easy 'till I have seen *the Duke*, and told *him* about Mrs. Bowen's *business* with you last night.—Saying this she went out *directly* in the Duchess of B——'s chair, and was carried by her Grace's *chairmen* to Argyll-House, attended *as before* by John Dean.—She was not absent from St. James's-Place *more* than three quarters of an hour; I was surprised at her coming back so soon, and she told me the message your Grace had sent her by the porter, *which was*, that you could not see her *then*, but desired she would come to you in the evening.—After she returned from Argyll-House, she remained with her aunt and me 'till about

three o'clock, when the Duchess of B—— called for her; I saw her from the window go into the carriage with the Duchess, and saw them drive from the door. Before she went down stairs, she desired us to go to Mrs. Bowen's lodgings to get the letters from her, and afterwards to meet the Duchess and herself in Hyde-Park.

I must here *observe* a circumstance which *otherwise* may be passed over *more slightly* than *it ought to be*; the light *will* find its way through the *smallest* aperture, so will *truth*, though intangled in the *labyrinths* of deception.—Is it a *very weak* argument, my Lord Duke, of her *perfect* ignorance in regard to the *writing* or *sending* these letters that *she* should *intend* to go for them herself, *and* with us if the carriage had been returned in any sort of season? Does it seem *likely* that *she* should have *proposed* being present at *my* interview with these *savages* had she written *two* letters at *their* lodgings that morning, *and* commissioned *them* to deliver *those* letters to *me*? impossible! supposing I could *not* have accounted for *every* hour of her time on *the sixth* day of *Februdry* which *might* have been the case, but which, God
be

be praised, I can account for, even then, if it had so happened, I should have asked your Grace the same question which I have now the honour of putting to you.—Was it probable this should have been the case after I had explained the whole of Mrs. Bowen's treachery on the preceding evening, of which nothing was concealed, because I chose my daughter should see her enemy as I had seen her, I had therefore drawn her in the same colouring as she appeared to me, like a venomous serpent, whose hisses were alarming, and in whose touch was destruction.—Knowing this, would she have gone to their lodgings the very next morning, have written letters there and confided the conveyance of them to Bowen and his wife, making them of consequence, and putting herself more than ever in their power? this would have been an act of folly, for which nothing but the most consummate state of idiotism could be accountable; but suppose her that idiot that she did go, that she did write, that she did confide in them, they must surely besides their other good offices have assisted her in framing those very letters, because the evening before, Mrs. Bowen had rehearsed the contents of them to me and very exactly, one small mistake excepted; which small mistake
 I have

I have before pointed out to your Grace,—
 Indeed, my Lord Duke, *these* absurdities
 are *too too* glaring, and the *falsehoods* too
 gross to be digested or *even* swallowed *unless*
 by *a certain set* who from *views of interest*,
 jealousy, revenge, ENVY, or any *other* mas-
 culine or *feminine* passion of that description,
 have *heroically* united themselves in *one*
 body to *destroy* a poor little girl, the *innocence*
 of whose *heart*, and the *rectitude* of whose
actions, are *unfortunately* a satire upon their
 own.—I am only *critically* just, I glance
only on *those* characters, where the *odium* of
 guilt *must at last fall*. I mean not to spend
 my *honest indignation* in *expressions* merely, but
 to touch the *adamantine* hearts, *if it be possible*,
 of that certain *combined host*, that has de-
 lighted to *oppress me* with *every* sort of
 affliction, the *most* difficult to be supported.

Again I return, my Lord, to the morn-
 ing, or rather afternoon, of the 6th of
 February; for it was three o'clock when my
 daughter drove from the door with the
 Duchess of B——, and in her Grace's
 chariot. They had been gone from St.
 James's-Place but a very few minutes when
 my own coach came back, after having at-
 tended

tended General Gunning the whole morning; my sister and I lost no time in going to Mrs. Bowen's, and the servant maid, who came to the door, gave into my hand a packet with her mistress's compliments, and was sorry she could not be at home to receive me. I said it was very well, and ordered the servant to go on. I was not long in opening this curious packet the contents of which I shall lay before your Grace.

On the envelope, and without a date, I was thus addressed by Mrs. Bowen.

For your satisfaction my D^r Mrs. G—— I enclose you what gave room to my suspicions concerning my cousin.—— Being engaged to spend the day with Lady Stanton she has called to take me out.

Your's sincerely (signed) L. Bowen.

My comment on the above note or letter will be but a short one, *that* what she had *sworn* to as *facts* on Saturday night, or Sunday morning, were *dwindled* into *suspicions*.

Enclosed

(76)

Enclosed letter the first.

Superscribed to Mrs. Bowen.

Tuesday

Dear Mrs Bowen.

AS you seem to be in the confidence of Mama I think it right to tell you that you may hint to her that my affections are engaged to my C——n L—d L—— and that I am not to be married to L—d B——— as she seems to think; will you be so good to get the enclosed copyed for me?

Affectionately yours,

(Signed) E. Gunning.

Observation on the above; the names of both parties are at length in the original, your Grace will know how to fill up the blanks I have left for them in the copy: There is this little commission in the spelling the first name only one small letter more than the name requires to be spelt with, which must have been particularly negligent in my daughter to have added, as she certainly has written the name too often for ignorance to have afforded her any shelter.

Letter

Letter the second, enclosed in letter the first, to be copied by Mrs. Bowen, written on a half sheet of paper, without date or direction.

SIR,

I must say I wish you and your daughter had known your own minds sooner in respect to my son.

I am your most
Obedient

Signed at length _____
but the name mis-spelt.

When to the score of *premeditated* cold-hearted *determined* villainy is added the vast sums of folly, *beyond* all *calculation*, that have been expended to *support* that *unfathomable* villainy, how will the *perpetrators* of it *shrink into themselves* when they see *not only* their *hearts but* their *heads* laid open to *public inspection*!

Having perused *more* than *once* those *notable* forgeries in our way to the Park, *rejoicing* to have got them into our possession, we soon came up with the Duchefs of B——, and both our carriages stopped within a

a speaking distance. — Have you got the letters, Mamma? said my serene angel. — I have, my love, replied I, holding them up, and you have gained a victory; I *thought* then as I *spoke*; I was by much *too* sanguine, the *victory* yet remains *to be gained*, but *that* providence, which has supported us in the *most* trying of our *calamities*, will, I have not a doubt, *conduct* us through *them*, with *honour* and with *safety*. — There were many coaches in the drive, for which reason I would not give her the letters *there*, but we followed them out of the park, and her Grace's carriage stopped at the top of Arlington-street, when the *alleged* writer of the *most* incorrigible nonsense than *ever* issued from the pen of an idiot, being *impatient* to see her *reputed* performances, sent one of the Duchess's servants for the letters, which having been delivered to her *we* parted; *she* to make visits with her Grace, and we came home; *where* the Duchess of B—— sat her down about five o'clock; *and* for the remainder of *that day*, being the *sixth of February*, we were no more separated, nor 'till we took leave of each other for the night, at the door of our respective chambers. — I beg to refer your Grace for our further proceedings on the *sixth of February* to page

the 2d and 3d of this letter. My daughter was with me in the carriage when I called at your Grace's door that evening. One thing I *must* observe, that on *this* night General Gunning did not sleep at home, but breakfasted with his family the next morning, a thing *very* unusual.

Monday, the seventh of February, I wrote a note to Mrs. Bowen, and because she might not *deny* that she had received it, I carried it myself. I did not enquire when I stopped at her door if she *was* at home, *but* gave it into her *maid's* hand, as *also* a pair of gloves and some music she had left on Saturday evening in St. James's-Place; the servant, without my being at the trouble of asking *any* question, *told* me her master and mistress were at dinner; they might have *spared* this *message*; I should *not* have broke in upon their *domestic felicity*; how *fearful* is guilt! it starts at its *own* shadow! yet, if innocence was *only* to be *expressed* by the contrary extreme of *confidence*, surely since *that* morning Mr. and Mrs. Bowen *must* have washed *all* their *black* deeds *white*, having, with *even* more than their *own assurance*, many days after I removed from Pall-Mall to my present lodgings in St. James's-
street,

street, not only *offered* but *even* exerted themselves to *force* upon us the *honour* of a visit from *them*; the *consequences* of which I shall *represent* to your Grace before I conclude my letter.— I shall here insert the copy of *that* note, which I left with Mrs. Bowen's servant.

Directed to Mrs. Bowen.

Mrs. and Miss Gunning present their compliments to Mrs. Bowen, and as they can *never* have an opportunity of *thanking* her *in person* for putting into *their* possession the two *black forged* letters, *one* supposed to be written by the ——— of ——— to General Gunning, the other *as falsely* ascribed to Miss Gunning addressed to Mrs. Bowen, they take *this method* to say how *very sensible* they are of the *good offices intended* them. Mrs. Gunning begs Mrs. Bowen to *recollect* what she told her on Saturday night, *and* the solemn *asseverations* by *which* Mrs. Bowen *attested* the *truth* of her intelligence, having done *this*, she would then recommend to Mrs. Bowen's *serious perusal* the psalms for *this* day, as *their* language cannot be *misinterpreted*.

Mrs.

—Mrs. Gunning desires her Opera Airs may be returned.

St. James's-Place,

Feb. 7th, 1791.

As I am *now* going to *drop* the curtain, that will for a *certain time* exclude from your Grace's view, and *also* from the scene of *action*, two performers, who *however disposed* for the *active* and *busy* characters, *appointed* to them by the *manager* or *managers*, must *now* have convinced the audience by their *blundering* and *distortions*, how *unfit* they were to *sustain* their *part* with *credit* to the *managers* or *themselves*; and before I *again* expose them on my *little* stage, I shall address *one serious question* to your Grace, *beseeching* you to give it *a close* examination.—I apply it to you, my Lord Duke, *first*, as a man of *strong* judgement and of *cool* reasoning—*secondly*, as a *military* officer, *whose* character is an *honour* to the *profession*; and *thirdly*, I ask your *decision* of it as a *father*.

To make myself *clearly* understood I shall bring *this* question forward, *cloathed* in a sort of *form* that may *enable* it to discover its *own* meaning, and to receive its *own* sentence, without my *further* interference.

G

Here

Here is an officer of birth, of character, and of rank in the army, whose conduct in America has marked him as by no means deficient in valour, who has been married nearly twenty-three years, twenty-two of which his wife to this hour looks back upon with regret, as having drawn off all her happiness, and left her nothing but the bitter dregs of sorrow and affliction.—This General officer is possessed of one only child, who to an understanding that would not disgrace more advanced age, than that she is yet arrived to, unites a heart, in which has constantly resided every feminine virtue, that gives to her sex the appellation of pleasing or amiable; where the spirit of coquetry, or the design of ensnaring, have never entered, where nature has alone governed, and from which every species of art has been excluded.—Here is also an officer, but a reduced one, a Captain upon half-pay, who has connected himself by a clandestine marriage with the General's family; both the officer and his wife are received by the mother of this amiable and only child, not with civility merely, but are distinguished by every mark of regard and kindness that it is in her power to bestow upon them; appearances are in their favour, and their hearts seem to have no expression
more

more strong than that of gratitude.— This officer looks up for *interest* and expects it to come from his *cousin*, the General, who *has a regiment*: he visits at the General's house, dines and sups at the General's table, and pays that *sort* of attention which is called *court*, to ingratiate himself with *his patron in Embryo*.— Suddenly, and without having received offence of *any kind whatever* from the *destined* victim, from *her* mother, or *any* part of her family, he *steals* upon them *unsuspectingly*, and under the mask of *friendship* buries the concealed dagger in the *very heart of innocence*, marking it with a thousand *gashes*, to deface, if that were *possible*, the brightness of *its* visage; he *forgets* in the moment of assassination, that *innocence is immortal*:— The father of this *only darling* child is a man of *valour*, but the *assassin* fears him *not*.— This *only darling child* is falsely disgraced, and her father himself pronounces with his *own* lips the *sentence* of her *banishment* from *his house* and from *his protection*.— The bands of *relationship* are by these very means drawn *tighter*, and the *union* more *closely* cemented, between the General, who *has a Regiment*, and the reduced Captain who *wants a Company*.— The father calls the *Captain* his *honourable friend*, who

has found out and discovered to him a *flaw* in his daughter's *reputation*, and holds him up as another *Scipio*; himself a *Roman* father; he *mistakes the character*, *Virginus* did not fasten *disgrace* on the *fame* of his *daughter*; she too was an *only* child; he stabbed her to prevent her *being* disgraced: This *Paragon of justice* hugs his *honourable cousin*, whilst the *Captain*, to shew his *bumble* gratitude, associates with his *patron's own groom*, a *stable* keeper, two *hostlers*, a *french* footman, and an *Irish chamber-maid*, to pursue with *easy affidavits* that *innocence* which he had before vainly endeavoured to destroy.

Thus, my Lord Duke, stands before your Grace my *question* in its *true* and *unquestionable* shape, make the *application*, and let your *own* heart announce judgement.

Tuesday the 8th of February, when we came down to breakfast, we found lying on the table the following anonymous letter thus directed,

Miss

Miss MINIFIE,

General Gunning's St. James Place.

These are the contents, but without a date.

MADAM,

The respect I feel for the character of Mrs. G—— as well as yourself makes me very sincerely feel for both. Why two persons so nearly concerned should be last undeceived appears to me extraordinary—Give yourselves but the trouble to enquire and all mysteries will cease—Apply *personally* to the Duchess of B—— you certainly may rely on her.

A Sincere Friend.

P. S. Don't be apprehensive of any duel, none is likely to take place.

Observe, if you please, my Lord, the *remarks* that I am about to make on the *above* letter of our very *Sincere Friend*.—St. James Place on the direction is exactly the same as it is spelt on the direction of *that* letter delivered by *General Gunning's groom*, and *supposed* to come from the D——of —— and which gave me the *first* suspicion of its having been opened, re-directed, and re-

G 3

sealed,

sealed, by somebody, with some *evil* design; — It is *likewise* spelt in the *same* way with the *threatning* letter my daughter received many months ago, and as the day after my sister got this *anonymous* letter, General Gunning *himself* told her Captain Bowen was the writer of it; and as it was *not* in his *own* but a *disguised* hand, I cannot but think it argues *much* in favour of *his* being master of *many* hands, and that he *may* have had no *small* share in *all* the other *forged* letters:— what can Captain Bowen, or *whoever* else is the *fabricator* of the letter, which is now the subject of my observations, possibly mean by desiring us to apply *personally* to the Dukes of B——, and by saying that *all* mysteries would *then* cease? it rather seems to *increase* than *diminish* the *number* of them; the Dukes of B—— could not understand the *machinations* of Captain Bowen and his *associates*, there is no *similarity* whatever in the *language* of *her* heart and *their* hearts.

I perfectly understand his *hint* about the duel, and so will *you* my Lord; there is *no* occasion for its being *publicly* explained. I should *hope* what I have *already* said, and *what* I have *still* to say, may suffice to convince

vince your Grace how *much* you have been *mised*, and how *severely*, how *very* *severely* we have been the *sufferers*. I should be extremely sorry to be *forced* upon still *plainer* language and *plainer truths*; but *she* who can give up a *once* beloved *husband* to *save* her *child* from a fate more dreadful than a *martyrdom* of *torture*, to snatch her fame, *pure* and *unsullied* from the hands of *stratagem* and *cruelty*, such a *mother* cannot be expected to *stop short* of her *designs*, because *other* sacrifices of *much less* consequence are *necessary* to be made to the *just* and *good* work she has *undertaken*, and *which* she is *determined* to pursue. I have never had but this *one* occasion on which I could *exert* myself as I have *now done*. I will not *misname* the sentiment that actuates me, it is not *stubbornness*, it is not *self-will*, it deserves the appellations of *resolution* and of *firmness*; on the *contrary*, with *what* satisfaction, with *what* *Joy*, shall I *lay down* the arms *necessity* has *forced* me to take up, in the cause of defenceless, *most* wronged, and *most* oppressed *innocence*.—Revenge is not the *instigator* of my purpose; I do not *even* desire that the punishment *her assassins* have so *well earned* should fall upon *them*, but that *spotless* honour, so *cruelly*

mangled, so inhumanly butchered, shall be healed, and that character, so meanly pilfered from her, shall be restored, even at the price of names and circumstances I now wish to conceal. Indeed, my Lord, I cannot, I do not for a moment, suffer myself to class you in the catalogue of her wicked pursuers; help me therefore to detect them; leave their punishment to the Almighty, but force them to restore what they have taken from us; we ask but for our own; that alone will make us sufficiently rich.—There is a glorious poverty and there is a poverty ignoble.—The loss of fortune in such a cause as this is glorious.—But to remain the sport of malice, the food of scandal, to set tamely down and submit to appear poor and deficient in such treasures as belong to the soul, in which we know our own riches, would be worse than the miser, who permits himself to starve in the midst of plenty. It would be more, it would be contemptible, it would be the very essence of the poorest poverty.—

I feel my subject, it impresses me to pronounce upon it with energy unequivocal.—I am near that period of my letter, which will open to your Grace a scene of distresses and of

cruelities, such as *Nero* himself, that great master in the *art of tormenting*, would not think a *disgrace* to his *talents*, had he been their *reputed* instigator.

Why have the *combined plotters*, for none but the *tools* of mischief would have so *meanly* employed themselves, amongst their other *ridiculous insertions* in the *news-papers* accused me of *Novel writing*; particularly of a book called *Waltham-Abbey*; which is made up *they say* of *tricks*, of *stratagem*, and of *forged letters*. I must *assure* them *their* mistake is a *very palpable* one, for though to have been the author of *that* book might possibly have done honour to my *genius*; yet, as I *never* have *seen* such a book, or ever *before* heard there was such a book written, I *cannot* without great *injustice*, and *greater* presumption, lay any *claim* to the *credit* of being its *writer*.

I shall not *dismiss*, since I have entered upon it, the subject of *news-papers*, without informing your Grace that I have experienced from the *conductors* of several *daily prints* the most *liberal*, and the most *gentlemanly* behaviour. — They have not only waited
upon

upon me, and with all the humanity of good, and all the candour of *honest* men, expressed *their* regrets that the papers *they* sent into the world should be *prostituted* to the purpose of throwing *unmerited* stains on the *fame* of my daughter; and, perhaps, excited to it by seeing before them the *interesting* object of the *enemies* attacks, *unhurt*, and even smiling under the *pressure* of *malevolence*, they offered *each*, and *separately*, to shew *me* every thing against her that might in *future* be sent to them *before* it was inserted, with the liberty of adding *to* or taking *from* such articles whatever I thought proper; they *even* assured me they should be *intirely* *suppressed* if *I* commanded it to be so.—I shall ever feel the same sentiments as I *did* at the *immediate* moment, when I received so *manly* a proof of concession from those gentlemen, whose *good nature* and *candour* gratified and pleased me—Nor did I make a *selfish* use of *their* indulgence. I told them, and it was from the *very* truth of my *heart* that I spoke it, *their* interest in the *sale* of the paper being *concerned*, I must at the same time, that I *thanked* them for their politeness, reject their *well-intended* proposal; that *even* could I have accepted it without
†
injuring

injuring *them*, I had *another* reason that would have prevented me from *accepting* it; that nothing had *ever* been *inserted* through the whole affair *by* myself, *by* any *part* of my family, or *by* any person or means whatever *known* to *us*, or at least that *we* knew. If, my Lord, *you* are convinced, *if* my *injured* innocent lamb *is* reconciled to your good opinion *and* your affections, she will be *now* dearer to your heart than *ever*, in *proportion* as *she* has *suffered* from the *false* impressions *you* have so *fatally* imbibed; *conviction* must follow the *truths* I have laid before you, and *then* *you* will not *only* understand *what* have been *my* feelings at *every* instance of friendship or *humanity* shewn to me on *this* occasion, but your Grace will also *partake* of them with me.

My soul is sensible of an *almost* unconquerable repugnance to enter on the *events* of Wednesday the 9th day of February, marked down on the calander of *time* as more *fatal* to *domestick* happiness, and more *destructive* of *natural* affection, than any *era* that has gone before it. I even *tremble* with horror when I reflect on the *irresistible* power that *now* bids me retrace them on paper; although
from

from my mind, whilst I have life and recollection, they never *never* will be erased.— I have but few circumstances to *add* to the preceding Tuesday the 8th of February, on that day your Grace saw this darling sacrifice. When in the morning she was taken to Argyll-House by her ———, I should die in *this* part of my narrative to call him her F——; all was *then*, at least in *appearance*, as it *used* to be; she did not see you but in the *presence* of General Gunning; but you received her with your *accustomed* tenderness. Surely, my Lord Duke, *you* would not have so *ill* bestowed those tokens of your *goodness*, had your mind *then* been tainted with the *poison* of suspicion; but (at what *unhappy* moment it *afterwards* took effect, or by what *witchcraft* I know *not*, it is *too* much for me to know,) from that moment I date a *succession* of *miseries*, perhaps *more* acute than even the *male* and *female* artificers who *worked* them into this form could, in the *most* sanguine of *their* hopes, have *supposed* or *expected*! On the evening of the same day my daughter went to Pall-Mall, and her dear maternal friend, the Duchess of B——, thinking her cough much increased, was very uneasy, and sent her home early; *when*
full

full of the tenderest *anxiety* for the preservation of her health, her Grace sent a note to her *own* physician to request he would lose no time in going to St. James's-Place, and prescribing for her, and Doctor H——, had the goodness to come to us soon after. Any elogium from *me* on this gentleman's skill or humanity would be arrogating to myself a knowledge, which must be *universally* understood wherever he visits; I have great obligations both to him and to Mr. Y—— for their attention to my daughter, during the *severe* indisposition that was the companion of her *other* misfortune; *and*, if your Grace should still be interested in her *preservation*, you will *not* think me impertinent that I trouble *you* on the subject of my acknowledgements to them.

I am at last arrived to *that* part of my letter, which *like death* has ever been in *my* view, and like death, though protracted, will *not* be *put off*.—I compare myself in my present undertaking to some miserable creature whose house is in flames, and who has no way to escape but by the dangerous expedient of throwing himself off from the very top of it; neither have I any way of
restoring

restoring my daughter's reputation *unblemished* to *your* Grace and to the *world*, before whom she has been *publickly* disgraced, *but* by giving up the *cruel* authors and *contrivers* of her disgrace; *one* of which, if it *had* been possible, I *would* have screened, *but* that *one* has put it out of *my* power by his own *hardi-ness* and *inflexibility*; I have *no* path to chuse *between* the two misfortunes; I therefore shall keep in *that* of *truth*, which, though *difficult*, is *straight*, and through which *God* and *my* *conscience* will conduct me.

Terrifick is the picture I am forced to exhibit; it must be a *mere* body *indeed* who can look upon it *unmoved*; the *designers* and *executors* of it excepted; a *soul* will be discovered in *every* spectator, and not a *wound* shall I inflict by *sympathy* or compassion, but will sharpen every pang of my *selfish* sorrow. — I might, my Lord Duke, in some *small* degree have spared *your* heart and *my* own by holding up this picture of *horrors* in a light as *little* conspicuous as *truth* would have permitted me to do, *but* understanding that *General Gunning* has thought it proper to *deny* his having *turned* *my* *darling* from his house, and on the *contrary* avows on every

every occasion that *she* left it *voluntarily*, I am *compelled* to bring it *forward* to the light, *such* as it *really* is, without *concealment* and without *exaggeration*; this new assertion imposes on me *additional duties*, it fastens on me the *necessity* of expunging it, for if suffered to remain, though every thing *else* were *done away*, she would *not* be that *faultless daughter*, and that *perfect being* which *I know her to be*, and for *which* I pledge my expectations of all comforts in *this world*, and all my *hopes of happiness* in the next.

As I mean not to apply to *report*, or to any *third person* by *hear-say*, for the explanation of *facts*, which are to be *clearly substantiated*, and as General Gunning did *not* deliver his *accusations*, or his *mandate*, for *her* departure from *his* house, *either* to my *daughter* or to myself *personally*, but to my sister, to her therefore I now resign my pen, that *she* may give the *exact* words that passed between General Gunning and herself on *that* occasion.

My

MY LORD DUKE,

I have the honour to lay before your Grace at the request of my sister Gunning, the following particulars of the conversation that passed between General Gunning and myself, on the 9th of February, respecting my niece Miss Gunning, and which I shall be ready to affirm at any time, or in any manner, your Grace shall think proper to require from me such confirmation.

I have the honour to be,

Your Grace's obedient servant,

M. MINIFIE.

Wednesday, Feb. 9. General Gunning called me into his dressing-room, I was at the time going to him, to tell him that Miss Gunning had been ill the evening before, and that Dr. H—— had been with her at the Duchess of B——'s request, which before he spoke to me I informed him of, but how was I shocked to hear him say, that he was not in the least surprized at it as she had such a load of guilt on her mind; that she had forged a letter from the D—— of ——, and also those supposed to have been
been

been written by L—d B——, that she prevented his, General Gunning's, groom from going to B——m, and had given him the letters which he was to say he had brought from the D— of ———. I asked him how it was possible for her to get the seals of the D— of ———, and of L—d B——; his answer was, she had seals of all kinds, and that she had been at Captain Bowen's lodgings, on Sunday morning the 6th, before they gave up the two letters to Mrs. Gunning; I told him those letters were not written in Miss Gunning's hand; his reply was, she could write all sorts of hands; I then told him that I had an anonymous letter yesterday morning; he said he knew that I had had one, and that it came from Captain Bowen; which letter, my Lord, Mrs. Gunning has inserted; he said, if I would take her keys I should find in her box the copies of those very letters; that he did not like to speak to Mrs. Gunning upon the subject as they were on bad terms: I did go up as he desired me; shocked to be sure she was at the falsehoods her father had alleged against her, but conscious innocence did not suffer her to be discomposed; she gave me her keys and I opened her box, in
H which

which there was no paper or letters, but such as came from your Grace's family; I went again to General Gunning and told him there were no such copies as he mentioned; then, said he, she must have burnt them. I told him she was as innocent as an angel, and that she was determined to vindicate herself; his reply was, that she would then be ruined for ever, for that if she did the D— of ——— would prosecute her and lay her in prison for life; that the only thing she had to do was, to go into the country, or leave England; I replied, she would do neither, that she was determined to clear her innocence; he said that was impossible, and bid me to watch her, for otherwise as soon as she felt the weight of her guilt she would destroy herself; I had not patience to hear more, and left the room.

About an hour afterwards, the General went out in the coach, and in another hour he stopped again at the door in his carriage, and sent up for me; he then beckoned me to come into the coach, which I did; tell

my daughter, said he, not to go to Argyll-house, for if she attempts it, she will not be let in; he again told me she must go into the country or leave England, and I again repeated she would do neither, but would stay and vindicate herself; then, said he, she must quit my house. I left the carriage immediately, he called after me, and told me to tell her every thing he had said. I replied I certainly would, and so ended all that I can recollect of the conversation.—There was nothing in General Gunning's appearance or in his words that spoke him grieved when he bid me to tell his daughter to leave his house.

The task, my Lord, again devolves on *me*, to pursue the detail of *miserable* Wednesday, and *many* succeeding days of *black* complectioned sorrows—I shall not *now* require the aid of any pen but my *own*, because I have been the witness of every scene ex-

cept that repeated by my sister and of which *she* only could give an *exact* relation.—The approaches of *honour* are awful, her *steps* are marked with *firmness*, and her countenance is stained with no reflection of *shame* when her *enemies* stand forth her *accusers*.—not like her *unshaken* constancy is the *effrontery* of guilt; there is nothing *awful* in her *affected* parade, every *unsteady* step she takes betrays her character however disguised; and though she may *some* times and for *some* purposes attempt to pass herself on *others* as the *friend* of *honour*, yet, rather than meet her *face* to *face*, she will wrap herself up in her *own* confusion, and sculk behind her *own* treason.—This observation, my Lord, is not intended as the *embellisher* of Facts, but to convey them to your Grace with more *decency* of *expression* than I could do by giving the *plain* and *undisguised* reason *why*, on the day my beloved child was *turned* from her natural home, General Gunning *strenuously* avoided the sight of *her* and of myself. My simile is tantamount to every thing that can be *said* on that subject.

I was

I was sitting by the bedside of my dear injured innocent, and holding one of her hands between mine, when her aunt came up into the room with a face paler than ashes, and agitated beyond all description, though she *evidently endeavoured* to conceal it—what's the matter with you *Auntee Peg* (a name which from infancy she has always called her by) what makes you put on such a long face? asked the angel. I *said* nothing, *but* my heart was not the *less* alarmed—my love, replied her aunt I have had a very *extraordinary* conversation with your father; and then with all the tenderness, and all the caution, that *could* be observed on *such* an occasion, she broke to us the *false* accusations, and the cruel *most* cruel messages that accompanied them——pause here! my Lord, and acknowledge the powers of innocence; for had a *single particle* of guilt been at this moment the *inmate* of *her* bosom or my *own*, such a sentence of *infamy* and *banishment* pronounced from the lips of a *father* and a *husband*, must have *destroyed* our faculties, if not *ended* our existence; the blow was *sudden*, and our perfect innocence made it

the *more* unexpected, of course we were the less prepared for its reception ; yet our faculties were not *annihilated*, nor were we *crushed* beneath its *ruinous* pressure.

Herefore, when *fiction* has guided my pen, my heart has been softened by compassion, and my tears have flowed over distresses of my *own* creating ; but *Nature* has appointed me to a task which I am totally incapable of performing—as a mother I cannot hold *her* pencil—the *colours* alone *blind* me, to lay them *on* is impossible ! *one* expression, though I *die* in the *repetition* of it shall not be withheld, and *may* it touch with *agonizing repentance* the heart of *him* to *whom* it was addressed—“ O ! papa ! papa ! is it *you* who *falsely* accuse me ? ”—and to her *own heaven* her eyes were directed, *streaming* with the *bitter* tears of anguish—A good God protected me—at *that* moment a *vow* issued from my *heart* which my judgement has since *confirmed*, and *this* letter I am *now* writing will only serve to *show* with what *steadfastness* I am *determined* to persevere till the whole meaning of *that* vow is *unequivocally* and *fully* performed.

The

The letters mentioned by my sister, which were found in the box of the dear *injured* innocent *Martyr*, belonging solely, my Lord Duke, to your Grace's *family*, and written to her on a *certain* subject, perhaps was you to see *them*, you would have *wished* me to suppress them—I *have done it*—had I experienced the *same* candour from *others*, which has marked *my* conduct to *them*, how different would have been *my* fate; I should have then nothing to complain of. I *scorn* a *mean* action, or to tread in an *intricate* path though it should lead me to a *throne*—*some* of the mysteries that envelope me, I should be much obliged to *your Grace* if you would have the goodness to *explain*. It is only from *yourself* I hope for an explanation or *expect* it; why were the affectionate letters *supposed* to be written by L—d B——— to my daughter, and *which* she was afterwards honoured with the *reputation* of being the *inventor* and the *writer* of, why were they never permitted to be in her *own* possession, or *even* in her hand but once, and that for *no longer* time than she could give them a *cursory* reading? how happens it that the four dif-

ferent Expresses your Grace sent to L—d B—— should *all* be under the management of my daughter, who *never* saw the affectionate letter so *flattering* to herself, and *supposed* to be written by L—d B—— till your Grace shewed it to her at Argyll-House? were they not, my Lord, *all* your *own* domesticks, and sent by your *own* commands to L—d B——? How comes it *then* that she has any share in *changing* or *altering* those letters? surely *her* treasures must be *inexhaustible*, that she should be able to command *your* Grace's servants, as well as *those* of General Gunning; and her capacity for *intrigue* and *management* must have been *very much* superior to *any thing* that has *ever* gone before her! Why, my Lord, are not the letters and copies of letters, *that* in the *fullest* confidence of my heart I had the honour, at your *own* request, to convey to *your* hands, why are the letters *to* and *from* my daughter, *even* to the *smallest* of her *notes*, why is a letter from L—d B—— to *a lady*, whom neither *your* Grace's *family* or my *own* has the *honour* to be connected with, why are they not *all* returned? General Gunning can
have

have *no* interest in *any thing* that concerns myself or my daughter. The 9th of February saw us separated for *ever* and for *ever*. It is *most* certain that I was not *commanded* to leave his house on *that* day, the General is *too* good a *manager* of his *fortune*, and has *earned* that fortune by *too* many *sacrifices*, to have given *me* a claim, by the *laws* of my country, to *any* part of it. No, to do him *justice*, the act of leaving his house was *entirely* my *own*, and if by having done so I should lay myself under the *censure* of *folly*, I have only this to say in my defence, *that* I rather chose to *follow* an ANGEL than to *remain* with the *very* reverse of an ANGEL.

Nothing that *I* can say of General Gunning's *prudence* and *economy*, in regard to *money matters*, which are *now* in a more *flourishing* state than at *any* time since *I* have had the *honour* of being numbered in his *household suite*, can be set down to the *score* of *flattery*; who will not suspect me of *even* *exaggeration* in this *particular*, and, *most* distinguished of *all* his *merits*, when I assure your Grace *that*, at the moment he divested himself

himself of so *heavy* an *incumbrance* as the maintenance of a *wife* and a *daughter*, he lost nothing but their *duty*, their *love*, and their *good opinion*; on the score of money he was a gainer; for, with uncommon *address*, by borrowing, that *same* week, from the narrow purse of his generous *unsuspecting* daughter, the whole of her little stock, the first loan *five* guineas, the last a bank note value twenty pounds, he contrived to dismiss them with *one* single *solitary* guinea *between* them *both*; my sister was not quite so ill *provided*, and, like the Children of Israel, *in more respects than one*, we had no *separate* interest, and the *means* of *one* became the *means* of *all*. The next day, indeed, General Gunning was so very *humane* as not only to send me a fifty pound bank note, but also a letter containing his *most friendly* advice, that we should go and *settle* in Italy; had I *condescended* to have made *any* answer to this *advice*, it should have been only *in these words*—"THE WICKED FLEETH WHEN NO MAN PURSUETH BUT THE RIGHTEOUS IS AS BOLD AS A LION."

Although

Although I have suppressed *ten thousand* times *more* than I have expressed, yet I believe I have said *enough* to make your Grace suppose, I should not think it an *augmentation* of my misfortunes to *resign* to the *principal* authour of *them*; if it was in my power, the honour of his *name*, and the title of his *wife*, the power of commencing *such* an *action*, and the *proofs* to support it *I am* possessed of, *but* I am *not* possessed of the *least* inclination or *intention* to take advantage of those proofs; and I will *honestly* tell your Grace the reason, for my otherwise *unaccountable* lenity; truth has been declared a *libel*, and as it is *not* impossible, but before my vow is *fully* accomplished, I may be *forced* to enter on *circumstances* where I shall hold it necessary to speak *very plain truths*, then I may find it *rather* more *convenient* to be a *married* than a *single* woman; it is only to screen *myself*, and not to subject *him* to damages that I have taken up *this* resolution; for it is his *partners* alone that will at *any* time be the *objects* of my *animadversions*; and from the resentment of his *partners* and *friends*, however *high*, or however *low*, he can have nothing to *fear*; surely his

partners

partners and his *friends* will not come on *him* for my poor trespasses.

I am *naturally*, my Lord, of a *cheerful* disposition, and as *those* sorrows that have overtaken my *darling* and myself *are not* the *offspring*s of our *own* conduct, they have only knocked at the *door* of our hearts and asked for *lodgings* there, but finding every apartment occupied by innocence, and her sober family, they now without intirely forsaking us, come, with a less severe aspect, and have not pilfered any thing that belongs to *us* or to *innocence*.

However I may, to prevent my spirits from sinking below the standard requisite to support me in my present employment, *sometimes* venture to deliver my *serious* sentiments, under the *light* garb of raillery, or *obscure* them in simile, still they are not the less *authentic* for being thus disguised; a *harmless* disguise, it *surely* may be called; for stripped of those *coverings*, the sentiments themselves might have appeared in a more *reproaching* form to *all* who have been concerned

cerned in *creating* them—my meaning is very much the same with *that* of a tooth drawer, there is something wrong in the *head* of *his* patient, there is *certainly* something also wrong in the *heart* of *my* patient, this *wrong* must be made *right*, and in the very *essence* of mercy we both try to conceal, *as much as we can*, the operatical instrument, whilst, with the *best design* in the world, we are putting *them* to the *torture*.

Loth, as I am, to turn back again to Wednesday, the 9th of February, its further *claims* to the notice of your Grace are not to be *resisted*; this protecting *husband* and this *sheltering* father, untouched by *remorse*, impenetrable to the *feelings* of *nature*; having left his *commands* for removing from *his* house the most *valuable* gem that a parent ever possessed, and the brightest ornament his *high family* have *ever* boasted—without a tear—without a sigh—without even asking how she had sustained the *weight* of *woe* his invention had *forged*, and his savage cruelty *forced* upon her; *he* left her, and he *left* her for ever to *faint*, or to *struggle* under it, as
 chance

chance might direct—mistaken man! it was not *chance* that presided over the destiny of *a being like this*—she had not disgraced the *work of her maker*—the immaculate pureness with which she came from *his* hands had never been *fullied*—she could with confidence look up to *him* for protection, and *he* protected her.

With all her calmness of soul, and fortitude that I have never seen equalled, for many hours it was impossible to move her from the spot *where* the *lightning* struck her; and it was near seven o'clock in the evening before we could, with any degree of safety to her precious life, drag her from St. James's-Place to Pall-Mall, where a house, of her *dearest* and almost *only* friend, was made ready for her reception—before we changed our abode of misery, for that hospitable retreat, General Gunning's groom asked to speak to me; I believe it was between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, and her physician was then with my *suffering angel*; I went into another room and sent for him up; I do not *exaggerate* when I tell your

Grace

Grace that I was *startled* when he opened the door and stood before me in the attitude of *guilt* personified in *all* his horrors; I looked *full* at him, as I should have done had an *evil* spirit, or Captain Bowen *himself*, been the object of *my scrutiny*; I asked what he wanted to say to me, and repeated my question more than once before the *wretch*, though he *did* attempt to speak, could make me a coherent answer; his eyes were fixed on the carpet, his face had not the vestige of life's blood in it; and I am *sure* he could not have stood had he not supported himself against the door; at last, without daring to lift up his eyes, he mumbled something about his having been with your Grace that morning, that now he had discovered all, and he hoped Master, Madam, and Miss would do very well again; he said something about his *Master's* having sent him, but what I did not understand *at* the time, of course cannot remember it *now*, this was *too* great a tryal for *my* patience, and I *commanded* the villain from my presence.

Oh!

Oh! my Lord, many, *even* many more than have *ventured* to shew themselves in the *light*, have been the enemies of my child and of me, in this most barbarous affassination of our *reputations*, and of our peace; if the most *inoffensive* lives could have secured us an *unmolested* passage through this vale of at best *negative* happiness, we had a *right* to expect it, but *there is* a *deadly* reason that *lurks* at the *bottom* of *this* mischief; jealousy, envy, and avarice have not been *idle*; search out *this* concealed, this *deeply buried*, cause of our afflictions; do it, my Lord, as you expect peace at *that* moment to *which* we are *all* arriving, for an omission *like this*, angels, who had the *charge* of executing it, *would be accountable*.

My daughter was so ill after she was removed to Pall-Mall, Wednesday, that though I was *determined* to leave her, as soon as I had seen her safely lodged, on very particular business in which she was herself concerned, yet I could not do it, till I saw her more composed and asleep, which was not till four in the morning, under the *tender* care

of her *affectionate* aunt ; I then prevailed on myself to quit her apartment, and in *twenty-four hours* I began and completed a journey of a hundred and forty miles, without taking off my clothes for two nights, or *any* refreshment whatever, but one glass of water and one of wine ; I mention this circumstance, not because I have any pleasure in egotism, but as a tribute to Divine Providence, *and* that others of my defenceless sex may know *where* to repose their *confidence* when they are oppressed with afflictions *as was, I* sinking under bodily complaints *as I was*, and forsaken *as I was* ; I speak from *conviction*, from *experience*, and whoever applies to the *same* source for *assistance* and *protection* that I have done, will never find themselves *disappointed*.

When I returned to Pall-Mall, Thursday the 10th, at half after four in the morning, I found my *heart's darling* much worse than when I left her : she had been bled, but seeing me come back *well*, and in *safety*, all her anxiety subsided, and she had a refreshing sleep of some hours—the day on which I was out of town, the day on *which* she was

I *dangerously*

dangerously ill, the very day following that ever to be stigmatised for deeds of complicated wickedness and complicated distresses, the corroding withered fruits of that contrived wickedness, was the day that General Gunning, whom Providence had honoured with the title of her father, but which name he had himself dishonoured beyond a possibility of ever reclaiming it, made choice of to dine and sup at the house of one of his friends, where his daughter had been invited, but had not accepted the invitation; and, indeed, since that time I understand dinners, suppers, private parties, and publick assemblies, have occupied all the hours of this extraordinary father, except those that are dedicated to the further destruction of his most amiable, unoffending, and most innocent daughter.

Accusations of so preposterous a nature, composed of forgeries, bribery, falsehoods, contrivances, and consummate vanity, were not taxes that virtue and honour would submit to pay, though invented, laid on and supported by him, whose authority, like Tippoo Sultan's, had never before been disobeyed or
disputed;

disputed; the residence of honour and virtue was in the chaste bosom of my daughter, they directed her *where* to appeal for *justice*, and for *judgement*; it was *not* to the courts of *men*, it was to *that* tribunal *before* which all men and *all women too* must account, *not only* for their *actions* but for the *motives* of *them*, and the blessed Evangelists were called upon by their *indisputable* evidence to attest her innocence. When she took the *sacred* pledge in her *steady* hand, and with angelick composure of countenance and of voice, carried it to lips uncontaminated by *falsehood*, I triumphed in the *adorable* object of my heart, and at *that* moment I could have received but *one* additional *gratification*, which would have been to have had *all her enemies* spectators of the scene before me. Of those attestations there were four authenticated to the same purpose and in the same words, one of them addressed thus—For my Father, his Grace the Duke of Argyll, Lord Frederick Campbell, General Conway, and Andrew Stuart, Esq.—was sent the same day, Monday the 14th of February, directed to your Grace at Argyll-House; another of them was conveyed to the

D— and D—— of M——, a third forwarded to L—d B——, the fourth remains in my possession, a copy of which I shall here annex, as the most proper part of my letter to which it can be affixed.

*Accusations alledged My answers on oath.
against me.*

I. I am accused of having written letters in the name of the D— of M——, and of L— B——, and also of writing anonymous letters.	I. I never have written, or caused to be written, any letter, or note, in my whole life, in a disguised hand, by a fictitious name, or anonymous.
---	---

II. I am accused of going to Mrs. Bowen's lodgings, on Sunday the 6th of February, about the forged letters produced by her.	II. I never was in Mrs. Bowen's lodgings in my life; I never met her by appointment, or by chance, at any third place; the only place in which I have ever seen her has been at my father's house, or in
--	---

in my father's carriage, and never without my mama or my aunt being present. I never wrote her a note or a letter in my life; I never spoke to her confidentially on any subject whatever.

III. I am accused of having bribed papa's groom, not to go to Blenheim with a letter from papa to the D— of M——, and a narrative of my writing, which I had drawn out at the request of papa for the purpose (as he said) of being sent to the D— and D—— of M——; that I bribed the groom, not *really* to go to Blenheim, but to *say*

III. I never spoke to papa's groom, or caused him to be spoken to, prior to, or on the subject of his journey to Blenheim; I gave him no orders whatever, or any letter whatever, or any bribe whatever; I believed he had been at Blenheim, and that the letter he brought back was from the D— of M——; and I felt happy and grateful for the ho-

he had been there pour his Grace had
 and to deliver, as done me.
 coming from the D—
 of M———, a let-
 ter that I had given
 him for that pur-
 pose.

The following preamble was affixed by
 my daughter, and written by herself, im-
 mediately after the accusations and her answers
 to them, and before the awful oath was ad-
 ministered to her:

As I may perhaps from my time of life
 be supposed not to understand the nature of
 the solemn oath I am about to take to attest
 my innocence of the above charges, I beg
 to assure the magistrate who shall administer
 the oath to me and the witnesses present, that
 I know, on the truth of what I assert de-
 pends my character in this world and my
 everlasting salvation in the world to come,

The oath being administered by William
 Hyde, Esq. one of his Majesty's Justices of
 the peace, and witnessed by two gentle-
 men

men of probity, was signed by herself,
E. GUNNING.

Your Grace may perhaps think these *particulars* are an *unnecessary* tax on your patience; if I have committed an error have the goodness to pardon it *merely* on these considerations; that I am reduced to the humiliating necessity of removing the *artificial* stains *malice* and *calumny* have thrown, allow me to add, I most *vulgarly* heaped on the character of a young unprotected creature, whose *heart* and *actions* will appear more *critically* correct the *more* and the *nearer* they are examined into; that I am *now* doubly *her* parent, for though her father *lives* he is no longer *her father*; that I am a woman cut off from every *possible* resource of consulting *wise* and *subtle* heads, how *I* am to have my injuries redressed; and last of all, I confess myself, though such a confession may be added to the score of my faults, an *offended*, I will use a still stronger expression and say I am an *exasperated* mother.

Sunday night, the 12th of February, at
half an hour after twelve, and just fourteen

hours preceding the angel's attestation, which so fully evinces the nature of her acquaintance with Mrs. Bowen, that plotting *gentlewoman*, not satisfied with the part she had so *kindly* undertaken, and so *speedily* dispatched, of assisting to make a *married* man into a *bachelor*, and a father childless, by helping him to clear his house of all matrimonial incumbrances, without considering how necessary it was that we should be allowed a *little* breathing time in Pall-Mall, before she again molested us with her olios of nonsense and mischief, she honoured the dear sufferer at the *above* house with the following *ingenious* composition, delivered at my door by a chairman, who said he brought it from the neighbourhood of May-fair; I shall give your Grace the copy of this letter as it lies before me, marked as she has marked it.

Directed.

Miss Gunning 49 Pall-Mall.

If you are not *quite* lost to every *natural* feeling for your unhappy parants, through your

means disunited, you will instantly confess your folly to your d^r mother, and no longer persist in what will inevitably plunge you into disgrace.—Though you have made a dupe of your mother and aunt you cannot the world—I shall not upbraid you with the part you have acted in regard to myself and Mr. B.—I leave that to your own conscience—any thing on my part that will be the means of uniting you all, consisting with truth and honour you may depend on; if you are not equal to the task of telling your folly to your mother let me know in what manner I shall. As the *sincere friend* of all I will do all in my power; for God sake let it be immediately before the world hears any more on the subject—I am convinced your heart is good and have *only* be led by folly—if you are disposed to make your family happy come to me *instantly* and tell me what I shall do, you shall *see none* but myself 'till every affair is settled to make you all happy—be not shy of coming to me I will receive you with the *sincerest love and affection*, and hope you will always consider me as your *sincere friend*—your father will be induced to take steps that must for ever
hurt

hurt you in the opinion of the world (*as now* his own character is at stake) the duchess of B——— *alone* will not be sufficient to protect you against the opinion of the world, besides at her time of life in the course of nature she cannot live long, how much more respectable will you appear in the world protected by your father.—— your present situation only will make you the ridicule of the town, consult your reason and your judgement and follow the dictates of your heart, which I am sure will lead you to act with sincerity and affection to your *very* unhappy parants. *For God sake* let all matters be as soon as possible accommodated, for all your mutual advantage; read this twice with attention and let me have a line to inform me you will act according to my *earnest* wishes for all your happiness, but remember *no time is to be lost*. Come to me, my dear cousin, instantly, and let us consult what is to be done for your happiness, and how cheerfully will I undertake it.

Adieu, your's

(Signed)

L. B———

Queen Street.

I have

I have sent Mr. B—— out of the way on purpose.

Sunday even half past six.

I have been denyed to every one who calld on me, and would not go out lest I should be asked any questions concerning you, whilst I saw a possibility of making up matter.

End of Mrs. Bowen's letter.

Undeserving, my Lord, as the above letter is of *your* notice on the score of its *own* intrinsic merit, and *contemptible* as I hold the *writer* of it, yet it may be made the ground work of a *few* observations, that, in a small degree, *may* elucidate the subject on which I have now the honour of addressing your Grace.

On the envelope of the letters, delivered by her servant to me when I called at her lodgings, Sunday the 6th of February, if your Grace will give yourself the trouble
to

to look back on that envelope, I think you will find these words:—" I enclose *you* what " gave room to my suspicions regarding " my cousin." *Suspicions* is rather a *vague* expression for *facts*, which but the evening before were announced with *certainty*, and confirmed by *oaths*; and seem to be equally a contradiction to this her second letter addressed to my daughter; as by the *importance* of her style, and the *immensity* of her *advice*, one cannot but suppose the *poor culprit* was *entirely* in her power—With what *severity* she condemns, and with how much *lenity* she acquits in the same instant, is amazingly curious; she has *disgraced* herself, she has made her parents *unhappy*, yet Mrs. Bowen is *convinced* she has a good heart.—She has *duped* her *mother* and her *aunt*, deceived Mr. and Mrs. Bowen, and is left by that *pious* lady to the *stings* of her *own* conscience; good woman! she is *too* charitable to upbraid her:—No, she is her *dear cousin*, and Mrs. Bowen the *sincere*st of her friends.—She invites her—will receive her with the *sincere*st love and *affection*, yet *dares* to treat her as a *criminal*! the least of whose *smiles* I have

have seen her play the *buffoon* and act the *hypocrite* in the *hope* of attracting.—She *threatens* her with the steps her father *means* to take against her, and gives for the reason that his *own* character is *now* at *stake*.—This is by no means the case, for *it has* suffered *execution*. She invites her to the protection of *this* father.—She bids her read her letter twice, and with attention—We have done *more*, we have read it a score of times, and to *attention* always have added *admiration*.

She desires her to consult her *reason* and her *judgement*; this is a trifling *error*, because if she had *not* the honour of reposing her confidence in Mrs. Bowen, the advice is *presuming* and *impertinent*; and if she had *chosen* Mrs. Bowen for her confidante in an affair where cleverness was certainly an indispensable requisite, the *choice* itself of *such* a confidential friend, would have explained *that* she had neither *reason* or *judgement* to which she *could* apply for council.

Having attempted the *dissection* of this *body* of *treason*, and perhaps like some of the profession shewn more *skill* than *tenderness*

ness in performing the operation, I shall for the present turn away from the subject itself, and take it up again at my own convenient leisure. I make no apology to you, my Lord, for my severity, but, if you think one at all necessary, your Grace will have no *difficulty* to find it in the *next* article.

Tuesday the 15th of February two questions stated on paper, and written by the hand of a father with all the *coldness* of a *stoick*, and all the *crooked* turnings and windings of the law were, presented to his *daughter*, and *that* daughter his *only*, his *meritorious* child; to tell her that *he had seen* her attestation, and to ask if she would confess that she *was* at Mrs. Bowen's lodgings, Sunday the 6th of February, and *there* wrote *two* letters; no other words whether she had not added the *horrible* crime of *perjury* to all the enormous charges of *guilt* and *meanesses* he had inhumanly *conjured* up against her; and these questions, so *shocking* in their *purport*, were pressed upon her when *she* was sinking under her afflictions, and *when* the state of her health would scarcely permit *me* to entertain a hope that God would any longer continue

to me the blessing I had received from his bounty. I had prepared my heart for obedience to *his will*; and the consummation of *her* glory;—Was *this* a time for *additional* cruelties!! If I say *more* I may say *too* much.

Friday, February the eighteenth, another *extraordinary* effort was made by the IN-HUMANE SOCIETY, but with what *design* I have not been able to fathom; indeed all *their* plots are *unfathomable*; but the *completion* of them is distinctly to be seen, *swimming* on the surface of *their* deep ocean of *contrivances*.—I think it was about one, or between one and two o'clock, in the afternoon, that the servant went to the door on hearing a double knock; I had before ordered that no body but such as I named should at any time be admitted; and no letters or note taken in that came by chairmen, the penny-post, or family servants; notwithstanding this caution, on seeing a stranger who looked very like a gentleman, and who asked very civilly if Mrs. Gunning was at home, the man who went to the door gave him admittance, and brought up his message, which was to request that he
might

might be allowed to see me for five minutes. I was angry with my servant for what he had done, refused to see the man, and desired he might be told I saw *no* company. In a few minutes I had a second message, to say that he came from Lady Lumm, and had *something* to tell me from her Ladyship. I gave no credit to this *tale*, but desired, if Lady Lumm had any thing *particular* to say to me, she would do me the honour to send me her *commands* in *writing*, and that the gentleman would give me no *further* trouble; but the servant, who had let him in, did not find it quite so easy to get him out again; he insisted more than ever on seeing me, he said he was a physician and his name Smith; that Lady Lumm, having heard I was in a *very* bad state of health, had wished me to consult *him*; and that he waited on me at *her* request. My answer was still a *negative*, with *this* addition, that I was much obliged to Lady Lumm for her goodness, and also to Doctor Smith for the trouble *he* had given himself, *but* could not accept their intended favour; being by great good fortune under the direction of a physician on whose judgement I *intirely* depended.

Doctor

Doctor Smith, or whatever *else* was his *real* name, was *too* good an *agent* to *those* who had *employed* him to drop his designs whilst there was a *chance* of his succeeding in them; but on the last message being delivered, he appeared much disappointed and mortified, and giving up the *character* of a *physician*, he tried to get admittance to me under that of a *mediator*; he said the *truth* was, that he was come on the *unhappy* disunion that had taken place in General Gunning's *family*, and *that* if I would *but* see him for *five* minutes, he could tell me *something* that he was *sure* would give me *great* satisfaction, or would I suffer him at *least* to send me up a note? I would neither see *him* or receive a *note* from him was the answer I sent down; finding I was *determined*, he at last went out of the house menacing me to the servants, that I should certainly *repent* my *obstinacy*, and many expressions of *elaborate* and *impertinent* pity for the *unhappy* situation of *poor* Miss Gunning.—This was the *last* disturbance my *pursuers* could give me whilst we remained in Pall-Mall; for the next morning, Saturday the 19th, we removed to St. James's Street.

K

From

From the 19th to the 23d of February, whether our tormenters were *themselves* tired of their *hard* duty, and required a *short* respite, or whether they had *not* found out to *what* house we were removed, I am not able to decide; but *we* had the comfort of remaining quiet and unmolested for that *little* space.

On the evening of the 23d of February, a person, the *respectability* of whose name and character opened my doors when they were shut to others of a *different* discription, did me the honour of calling, and left in my hands copies of six affidavits, sworn to by six of General Gunning's *friends*.—Why a *gentleman*, who has the *honour* of bearing his *Majesty's* commission, I mean Captain Bowen, and *why* a gentlewoman, I mean Captain Bowen's *wife*, should join *their* names, with names so *much* inferiour to their own, *allowing*, as on the *present* occasion *it must be* allowed, that in point of *honour* and *moral* honesty, *all inequality* was done away, yet the *combination* of names alone can no otherwise be accounted for *than* by the *singularity* of the case, on which their *mutual services* were required, and *those sort* of *family feelings*, against which *honour* has no *fence*, nor *dis-*
honour

honour any *bounds*; if your Grace will bestow a moment of reflection on the *message* delivered to *me*, with the *affidavits*, and which I shall state with my usual exactness, you will perceive, my Lord, I have *not* raised up an opinion *without* being *able* to *shew* that it is built on a *good* foundation.—

In the *message* was contained the following *proposals* from General Gunning: That, *if* I would *suppress* the letter I meant to have the honour of presenting to your Grace, *he* would *suppress* the six *affidavits*, the copies of which he had sent me; but on the contrary, *if* I *persisted*, the day on which my letter was *published*, *his* collection of *affidavits* would be published also.

Here, *indeed*, is a house divided against *itself*; a *father* against his *own child*, and a *wife* against *her husband*; a fault *must* be *somewhere*. Let this *falling* house, my Lord, be *examined*; let the *defective* part be made *visible*, or the *whole* may be destroyed. Whether the sentence falls on *him* or on *me* it is my petition that heaven will alone *prop* and *support* that *part* of it which has *justice* for its *basis*, and whose ornaments are *truth*, *pity*, and *affection*.

The message, sent by General Gunning and delivered to me, being a verbal one, the bearer of it received not only from my lips, but from the very *foundation* of my heart, to be conveyed to General Gunning, the following reply:—That I *refused* his proposals, and was not *intimidated* by his threats; that the innocence of his daughter *should* be exemplified, and as I was conscious the power of publishing, or suppressing, centered entirely in myself, on the penalty of my life to be forfeited, the hour *before*, or the hour *after* the publication of my letter to your Grace, I would most cheerfully persist in my fixed and *unalterable* determination.

The next evening, the 24th, the same person made me another visit on the same errand, and received the same answer; together with the copies of the affidavits delivered to me, with the *threat* of having them *published*, was also tied up the copies of a most curious and *notable* letter, *produced* and *sworn* to by my daughter's most *sincere* friends and *dear* cousins, Captain and Mrs. Bowen; to the latter of whom it was addressed by Miss Gunning *at least*, as does appear stated and set forth in *their* affidavits.—

I will lay the contents of this *letter* before your Grace. You will have the goodness, my Lord Duke, not to *insist* on my *producing* a *date* to my daughter's *epistle*, that is not in *my* power to do; because *when* Mrs. Bowen *indited* it, she either forgot to give it a *particular* date, or, what is *more* likely, she thought the *day* and the *hour* when it was written would answer *her* purpose *better*; however, there are such a *large* family of *Tuesdays* in the *Circle* of time, that I can give your Grace *no* direction by which you may *find* out the birth of this *illegitimate* Tuesday *produced* by the Captain's *Lady*.

COPY of a LETTER sworn to by CAPTAIN
and Mrs. BOWEN.

Eight o' clock Tuesday.

YOU will, my Dear Mrs. Bowing, be surpris'd at receiving a note from me so early, but when I tell you my motive you will I am sure interceed with Mr. Bowen to pardon the liberty I am going to take and grant my request. I will tell you in a very few words the situation I have for some time been in. Mama weded to Ld B———

K 3

thought

thought every thing he did right while I was merely a cypher in the whole affair and indeed to tell you the truth that was the *only* light I wish'd to be considerd in for tho I acknowledge him to be very amiable my heart refused him *any* share in it as it has been long devoted to another within this week I have gaind - papa so far on my side as to represent to him that I was displeas'd with the conduct of Ld B—— and as he has a *natural* affection for the person *interested in my application* he *the* more readily joined *me* and three days ago wrote at my positive request to the D—— of —— to tell him I was not satisfied with Ld B—— and in the most handsome manner wish'd to break off all further connection the D—— of —— wrote a letter which we received yesterday and of which I enclose you the copy and beg you will have the goodness to ask Mr. Boying to write it of fair for me as I wrote it from memory and wish to send it to a friend of mine this evening by the post pray tell him my story but save me as much as you can if I could present Ld L—— to you he would be an apology for every thing I have done neither papa or I have courage to tell mama this for she de-
tests

tests the person dearest to me on earth I am sure I may depend on your not telling her any part of this letter I should have spoken to you last night but I found I had not courage. do not send any note or message *to this House* about the contents of this letter I will send to you about two o'clock for the copy I hope Mr Bowing will have the goodness to send me I would call but that I am to be all the morning at Argyll house I write in such a hurry I do not believe you will be able to read this.

Ever yours affectionately

(COPY.)

E. Gunning.

“ This is the paper writing marked
“ with the letter (B) mention'd and referr'd
“ to in the affidavit of ESSEX BOWEN,
“ Esq; this day sworn before me, 24th Fe-
“ bruary, 1791.

(Signed)

E. LEEDS.

(A COPY)

These, my Lord, are the whole of the contents of the paper before me; and I have only to intreat of your Grace, that you will compare them with Mrs. Bowen's conversation with me on Saturday the 5th of

K 4

Fe-

February, and with the letters delivered to me at the door of her lodgings on Sunday the 6th.

I have but the following circumstance to relate, with *which* at least for the present I mean to trouble your Grace.

The *In-HUMANE-Society*, finding my resolution of appealing to your Grace, not to be moved by *common* efforts, and that the *bugbear* affidavits, and the *more* contemptible letter involed with them, had not *even* made me change my *countenance*, much *less* my *purpose* : they had recourse to enterprises of *so bold a nature*, as *plainly* bespoke the *horrors* they were under at the very *idea* of standing before your Grace in their *proper* colours; *this* deed of *desperation*, a gentler name it does not deserve, was attempted, but very *poorly* executed, on the evening of Friday the 25th of February, between the hours of seven and eight; it was the *very* night after I had confirmed my *absolute* rejection of General Gunning's proposal of *suppressing* the evidence against *his* daughter, if I would suppress my *Letter*. A single knock at the street door did *not* announce the approach of
visitors,

visitors, it was rather the *humble* signal of *conspirators* and *assassins*; there was a heavy fall of snow at the time.—My servant opened the door at the *insidious* summons, when Mrs. Bowen, without asking a single question, *rushed* by him, and in another moment was in the room, where my sister, my daughter, and myself, were sitting, as comfortable, and as chearful, as *heaven's* protection, and *conscious* rectitude, could make us. Had we seen a *spectre* we could not have been *more* shocked, or *more* terrified, than at the appearance of Mrs. Bowen in our apartment. My harrassed and stricken deer was the first to *know* her *enemy*, though so disguised in her figure, that the servant who opened the door had no idea *who* it was, till her *heroick* husband followed her in. Actuated by the same apprehensions and the same terrors, we all sprung from our seats, and fled from the room, with such precipitation, that guilt itself could not have been winged with more swiftness. I said as I passed her, bold *wicked* woman! how *dare* you enter *my* house? She try'd to stop me, as she *also* did my sister, who followed me; and I heard her say, *my dear* Mistress Gunning, I am come *as a friend*, stop, for
 God's

God's sake ! it is *all* a mistake. I was by this time half way up the stairs, when I heard a great battle of words between my servant, John Dean, and the *valorous* Captain Bowen ; who said he would go wherever *his wife was*, and John swore he should not. I called down to the servants to shew them both out of the house ; yet all the time making the best of my way up the stairs. Mrs. Bowen's voice was *now* changed from the *weedling* cadence of a sycophant, to the *boisterous* notes of an *enraged* fury ; the *only* words I could distinguish in my *flight*, were, that we were all stark staring mad ; and calling to her *gentle* mate, she begged he would not give himself the *trouble* to come up, which advice he followed ; for this *simple* reason, that the servant, who protected us, would not *let* him move a *single* step towards us. He had called at the door this *very* morning and asked to see us, but was *denied* admittance, which I imagine was the cause of their evening *exertions* ; their visit then was indeed *but* a short *one* ; yet it occasioned us a great deal of trouble. My beloved child was so terrified, that she continued extremely indisposed the whole night. The message, Captain Bowen left with the
servants

servants to be delivered to *his friend* General Gunning's *daughter* and his *wife* was this : tell them, said he, they will *repent* of their *folly*, I came to save them from *destruction*, to-morrow will be a *terrible* day for *them*, and in *three* days Miss Gunning will be sent to *Newgate*.

This *threat* had exactly the *same* effect on me as all the other *stratagems* they had used before, that is to say, I very *composedly* continued to have the honour of addressing myself to your Grace, and have taken no *other* notice of their *intrusion*, than to *forbid* them by my *lawyer* from using the *freedom* to *force* themselves upon *me*, or *my* family, in *future*. This notice, I believe, rather alarmed the noble captain, as the next morning he waited on my lawyer, and very *submissively* begged to know, if the letter he had received from him the evening before *was* a *professional one*; and being answered that it *was*, he desired I might be informed I should have no more trouble from him and Mrs. Bowen.

On the evening of Monday the 28th of February, General Gunning sent a letter to his daughter, which original letter, with a
copy

copy of her answer, she enclosed the next morning to your Grace, and sent it under cover, directed to Mr. Ogilvie, desiring he would convey it to you.

The copies of both these letters are still my own, and I shall here lay them before your Grace, as it is *impossible* for me to *suppose* you have ever received them from Mr. Ogilvie. They were certainly *entitled* to *some* notice from your Grace; but on the *contrary* the virulence of her PERSECUTORS has *since* that time rather *increased* than been *diminished*.

COPY of GENERAL GUNNING's Letter to
to his Daughter.

Monday Evening.

FROM an heart that still feels most sensibly the affections of a father for her who was dearly belov'd proceeds this letter that afflicted father desires an interview with his unfortunate daughter in which she may depend on having no more to fear than the workings of an anxious and perhaps over indulgent parent the time and place of meeting

ing is left intirely to her who is even now
dear to

(Signed) J. GUNNING.

(COPY)

Send an answer sealed with
red wax by the bearer
I have opend the note and
made it up in the form
of a letter I sup to night
in Soho Square I lodge
at No. 13 Norton street,
Portland Place.

COPY of Miss GUNNING's Answer to her
Father.

Monday Evening.

TURN'D from your doors defenceless
pennyless and robb'd by you of what is and
ever will be dearer than my life—my cha-
racter—Stigmatized for forgeries which those
who really did forge the letters and *you* Sir *must*
know I am as innocent of as heaven is free
from fraud *you* who I never in my life offend-
ed in thought word or deed to cast me out
upon the wide world as a guilty creature
when

when you know my heart would not have harboured a thought, that could have dishonoured you, myself or my sex; and after you had thrown me off to pursue me as you would the bitterest of your enemies, to raise up false witnesses to crush that child whom you should have protected with your life; innocent as I again repeat you *know* me to be, even had I been guilty, which God be praised I am not, still *you* should have screened me, and your chastisements should have been softened by pity; you call me unfortunate, I am unfortunate; who has made me so? This unfortunate never will appear in your presence, 'till you announce, and that in the most publick and most unequivocal manner, to the whole world, how much she has been wronged by scandalous contrivances, and unheard of calumny.

(Signed) E. GUNNING.

The *insertion* of these letters, my Lord, I take *intirely* upon myself; I do it even against the *solicitations* of my daughter, who, from motives of respect and delicacy, would have prevailed on *me* to have withheld them; but in *such* a *plot* against her, and *where* so

many deceptions have been carried on, I *see* the *necessity* of doing as I have done.

I had the honour of beginning this letter to your Grace before I moved from Pall-Mall to St. James's Street, *since* which the *studied* interruptions which the *black* ministers of darkness have industriously thrown in my way, as *stumbling blocks*, to impede my purpose, though not fully answering *all* their *designs*, have by no means *forwarded* the publication. To *messengers* and *messages* *persuasive and* menacing, I lay the charge of my having hitherto omitted to make *one very conclusive* observation; however, as it can have lost neither in *weight* or *strength*, I shall *here* produce it for your Grace's inspection.

The two letters now in my possession, and which were delivered to me by Mrs. Bowen's servant, at the door of her lodging, on Sunday the 6th of February, as what gave room for her *suspensions* of her cousin, I use her *own* words; these *letters*, my Lord Duke, have no similitude *whatever* to the handwriting of my daughter: *now*, if she had
really

really been the author of them, *and* they were addressed (as by their contents appear to be the case) *in confidence*, and *to* a confidential friend, is it possible to suppose (allow her *capable* of disguising her hand which I *aver* she is not) that on *such* an occasion she should disguise it; yet sign her name as she usually does sign it, E. Gunning; where could have been the inducement? this is a contingency, my Lord, against *which* I must doubt if the *wise* projectors have made any provisions; the other letter since cooked up by the *paternal* and *friendly* associates, a *Tuesday*-dated letter, like the *former*, I have not seen, so cannot speak upon the merit or demerit of its *imitative* powers; a copy of it only has been sent to me, and *that* after it had received the ratification of (*to the makers thereof*) a trifling *affidavit*; but though not able to give a decided opinion, I may venture to *suppose* that if this *smuggled Tuesday*-letter is *impartially* examined, it will be found liable to the very *same* objections with the former, *viz.* the hand *writing* disguised but the name of the *supposed* writer *affixed* to it.

By representing *facts* the evidences of
which

which are *incontrovertible*, I *merely* perform a *christian* duty; for supposing I had been a *stranger* to the *party* oppressed, yet being also the *enemy* of *oppression*, and the *friend* of *justice*, those facts should have been *produced*, every *circumstance* that could have *detected* the criminality of *that* confederacy, who have *abandoned* themselves to the most *destructive* purposes, every letter or *other* convicting proof, chance might have put into my possession, should have been brought forward, as I *now* bring them forward, *even* at the risk of my *fortune*, and at the hazard of my *personal* safety.—I would have held *back* no *truth*, which it was in *my* power to advance, that *could* assist in tearing off the mask of honour from the face of guilt.—*This* is a *christian* duty!—To wipe away the tears of *sorrow* from the eyes of *innocence*, to give to her pallid *cheek*, from which it has been *basely* pilfered, the *flush* of *victory*, to re-plant the *roses* of contentment in her bosom, and present her to the *world* in her *own* white and unspotted mantle.—*This too* is the *duty* of a *Christian*! I would *not* have expected *praise* from *man*, I would have asked my reward from *that* Master in *whose*

L

service

service my *feeble* talents were exerted.——
 Shew me, my Lord Duke, a young creature,
one whom I have *not* the *felicity* to call my
 daughter, and I will act by *her* as I *have* acted
 by my *own*; I will be the *soother* of her
miseries, the *supporter* of her *cause*, and
 the *vindicator* of her *honour*; but *shew* her
 to me after the very portrait of my *daughter*,
 —— so *humbled* in her situation, yet so *exalted*
 in her sentiments.—— So *invironed* by malice,
 yet so *free* from revenge.—— So *pursued*,
 yet so *uncontending*.—— So *persecuted* by
 every *possible* mode of *slander*, yet *cautiously*
 concealing *from* the world *circumstances*,
 which, if made *known* by any *other* means,
 would be *honourable* to herself, and cover her
slanderers with *eternal* confusion.—— So *charged*
 with *meannesses*, yet *possessing* the very *soul*
 of *dignity*.—— So *laden* with *crimes*, extracted
 from the *bottomless* mines of *mischief*, yet in-
 nocent as *angels*.

On the truth, *the* unexaggerated *truth* of
this character, my Lord, I rest my hopes of
 receiving compensation in *this* world, and a
favourable reception into that *more* perfect
 one, from *which* avarice, jealousy, envy,
 dupli-

(147)

duplicities, falsehoods, forgeries, and perjuries, are for ever excluded.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORD DUKE,

Your Grace's most obedient servant,

SUSANNAH GUNNING.

St. James's-street.
March, 9, 1791.

ERRATA.

Page 67, line 12, for *to on* read *on to*.

69, line 3, for *I don't say it was not read I do not
say it was.*

75, line 21, for *or Sunday morning* read *on Sun-
day morning.*

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